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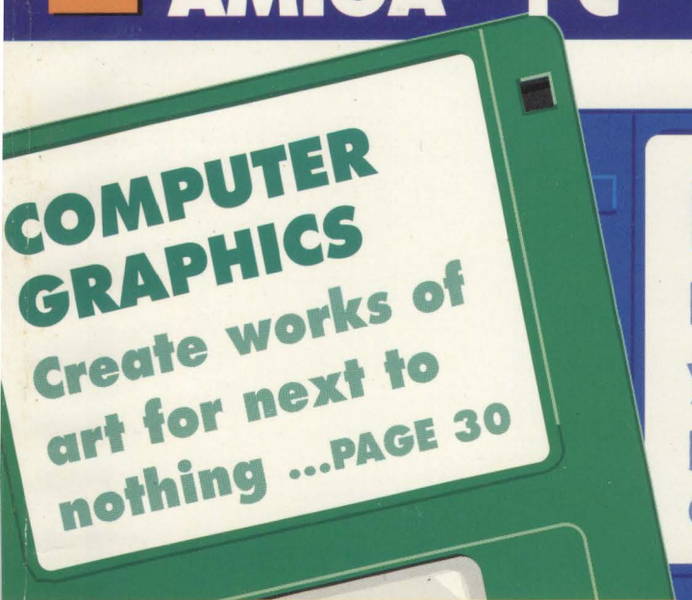

COMPUTER GRAPHICS

Create works of art for next to nothing ...PAGE 30

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DISKZINES

Is magnetic media the shape of things to come? ...PAGE 48

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AMIGA

Rollerpede: Chaotic *Centipede*-style action
Text Engine: Easy-to-use text editor
SysInfo: View your Amiga set-up on-screen

PC

Bananoid: Colourful scrolling *Breakout* action
Handwriting Analysis
Renju • Flip-It

ST

EZ Art: Create your own masterpieces with this art package
Invaders: They're back! Classic arcade action reincarnated

Program packed disk. Quick – turn to page 6 for details!

Tri-format disk © Rob Northen Computing

TRY BEFORE YOU BUY...

The best that shareware has to offer

What no cover disk?

Why not ask the nice person behind the counter whether they are keeping it safe for you!

FULL DETAILS OF DISK ON PAGES 6-9

WIN A MOUSE!

...PAGE 91

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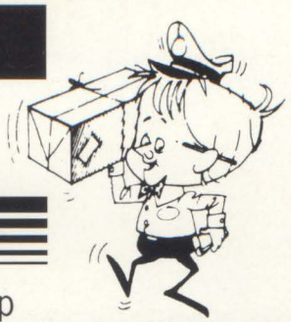

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GAMES

AG.01 **Star Trek;** Superb strategy game digitised graphics! (2D-Mb-3 disks)
AG.02 **Various;** Gravwars, Jackland, Pacman, Othello, Empire, Hanoi...
AG.03 **Star Trek (Agatron);** Strategy game - Tobias Richter. (2D-Mb-2 disks)
AG.04 **Monopoly;** full version of the classic property trading game!
AG.05 **Pacman 87;** Multi level version of this addictive arcade classic.
AG.06 **Various;** Cosmoroids, Amoeba, Blackjack, Backgammon, Yahtzee etc.
AG.07 **Board and Card Games;** Cluedo, Othello, Klondike and Cribbage.
AG.10 **Space Invaders;** Arcade Classic version! Plus: Lander, Amoeba...
AG.11 **Tennis;** excellent shareware sports simulation. (Mb)
AG.14 **Flascheiber;** Boulderdash style game. Almost Commercial quality!
AG.15 **Paranoid game;** Arkanoid style including a screen designer.
AG.16 **Castle of Doom;** Adventure game with graphics - beginners level.
AG.17 **ST Bash;** Space Invaders style shoot 'em-up, aliens are Atari ST's.
AG.18 **Golden Fleece;** Infocom quality adventure, Tron, Train, Star Fleet.
AG.22 **Return to Earth;** Elite style Space Trading game, digitised sound.
AG.24 **Drip;** Arcade quality painter game, China Challenge, Frogger etc.
AG.27 **Star Trek (USA);** Strategy game. Captain the Enterprise. (2D-Mb-2 disks)
AG.28 **Quattro;** Tetris style, China Challenge, Breaker and Asteroids
AG.29 **Chess;** Superb Multi Featured! Tiles, Tetriz Two, Battleships etc...
AG.30 **Twintris;** Superb shape dropping game! MUCH better than original! (*)
AG.31 **Simpsons;** vertical scrolling shoot-em-up style game! (SEUCK)
AG.32 **Legotris;** another Tetris style game, amusing digitised sound effects.
AG.34 **Tile Game;** AMOS games creator variation on the old 16 puzzle.
AG.35 **Cave Runner;** Commercial quality Boulderdash style game! Excellent!
AG.36 **Wizzys Quest;** Professional quality arcade puzzle game.
AG.38 **Star Trek - Arcade game;** SEUCK produced scrolling shoot-em-up.
AG.39 **Wacko in Wonderland;** Platform game with large Graphics! Cute!
AG.40 **Metagalactic Llamas;** Classic Commodore 64 game by Jeff Minter
AG.42 **Games Galore;** Star Trek, Trivia, Pharoahs Curse, Monopoly, Mazeman, Roll On, Dad, Cosmo 2, Cat and Mouse.
AG.43 **Gridrunner;** Classic Jeff Minter shoot-em-up, Rebound; Arkanoid style, Invaders; Space Invaders version.
AG.44 **Sorry;** The board game, Flipper, Missile, Blackjack,Video Poker etc.

GAMES (continued)

AG.45 **Seven Tiles;** Superb speedball style game with digitised effects!
AG.46 **Megaball;** Brilliant Arkanoid style game with Editor!
AG.48 **Diplomacy;** War Strategy game.
AG.49 **Eat Mine;** Emerald Mine copy, 80 levels of brain straining action.
AG.50 **Master of the Town;** Shooting Gallery. Smash Windows, etc. (*)
AG.51 **Frantic Freddy;** Platform game, good conversion of C64 favourite!
AG.52 **Block It;** Superb Puzzle game!
AG.53 **Nakamoto;** Great Platform game.
AG.54 **Downhill Skiing;** Classic game.
AG.55 **Amos Defence;** Shoot'em-up.
AG.56 **Assassins Games II;** Invaders, Girl Action, Missile Command, Bally 2, Maze game, Think Ahead.
AG.57 **Battleforce;** Fantasy Action. (*).
AG.58 **Balloonacy;** Great updated version of the classic Bomber game.

SOUNDTRACKER

SND.01 **Soundtracker;** Four versions of this favourite Music creation program.
SND.02 **Soundtracker 4;** alternative version + instruments disk (2 disks)
SND.05 **Soundtracker 8 Track;** Superb! Plus converter for 4 track files...
STI.01 to STI.08 Digital Soundtracker samples! 8 disks packed with 100's of files! (Buy one or all 8 for £7.99)
STS.01/02 Sampled effects! (2 disks)

EDUCATIONAL

AE.01 Blackboard Maths, Concentration Colourpad, Cat & Mouse etc (Age 5+)
AE.02 Spellquiz, Wheel of Fortune, Tug 'o' Word, Maths Test etc. (Age 5+)
AE.03 Fractals, Desktop Calculator, Function Plotter, Evolution. (Age 11+)
AE.04 **Gravitywell,** Weatherman, Gravsim, Airfoil... (Age 11+)
AE.05 **World Data Bank;** CIA world map, 3D Plot, Calendar Factory...(11+)
AE.06 **Talking Spelling Tutor,** Speech Toy, German Language Test, Elements, Globe, Geotime... (2 disks) (Age 11+)
AE.07 **Educational graphics;** Technical illustrations; Biology, Astronomy etc. Some animated (eg. pumping heart) Load into Deluxe Paint etc. (9+)

SLIDESHOWS

AS.01 **Boris Vallejo 1;** Professional quality graphics in interlaced HAM!
AS.05 **Exodus Real 3D show;** 9 very impressive Ray traced pictures.
AS.06 **Swimsuits;** Great pictures from the U.S. Sports Illustrated mag.
AS.12 **M. C. Escher;** Animated slideshow of Eschers paradoxical artwork...
AS.20 **Slideshow Construction;** pictures scroll up/down, fade in/out! etc..
AS.22 **Viz;** Digitised pictures from the wonderful Viz magazine.
AS.23 **Agatron Slideshow 10;** Ray Trace pictures of Star Trek ships including shots from T. Richters impending video.
AS.25 **Fraxion Slideshow;** Fantasy pictures, expertly digitised in HAM.
AS.26 **Neighbours;** Pictures from TV! (Rude comments in speech bubbles!)
AS.27 **Tobias Richter Slideshow;** Hi-res pictures with a sci-fi theme...
AS.28 **Gorezone;** Sick horror pictures!
AS.29 **Colourpic;** Digitised pictures produced with Colourpic and Superpic real time video digitisers.
AS.30 **Invisible World;** Amazing hi-res digitised pics of fleas, bed bugs, etc.
AS.31 **Boris Vallejo 3;** Fantasy pics.

CLIP ART

AC.01 **Deluxe Paint;** lots of quality pictures in low, medium & high res.
AC.02 **Pagesetter Art;** Animals, Food, Computers, Fantasy, Holidays...
AC.04 **IFF Alphabets;** 30+ screens of character sets and surfaces...
AC.05 **Animals,** Anatomy, Buildings...
AC.06 **Cartoons;** People, Animals...
AC.07 **Holidays,** Flags, Flowers etc.
AC.08 **Music,** People, School etc.
AC.09 **Signs;** Titles, Logos, Headings.
AC.10 **Teddy Bears;** ideal for Present Labels, Greetings Cards etc...
AC.11 **Nightclub,** Vintage Cars, Bikes.
AC.12 **Colour;** Occasions, Transport, Signs, Electrical, Architecture...

UTILITIES

AU.01 **Jazzbench;** Workbench upgrade with many indispensable features!
AU.02 **UEdit;** Excellent file editor, a vast improvement on Ed!
AU.03 **QL Emulator;** plus 2 data disks packed with files. Superb! (3 disks)
AU.10 **Graphic Utilities;** Fontfixer, IFF Convert, Palette Convert etc...
AU.11 **Starchart;** Gives positions and movements of all major constellations
AU.13 **Visicalc;** Superb full featured Spreadsheet with manual on disk.
AU.15 **Dope Intro Maker;** Create demos with this user friendly package.
AU.17 **D Copy;** Excellent disk copier, similar to X Copy, Good Nibble mode!
AU.18 **North C;** Complete C Environment for the Amiga! Amazing value!
AU.19 **SID;** Workbench replacement with easy file handling, improved DMouse window control and many more features.
AU.20 **K.O. The Virus;** Virus detectors and killers! Includes; Virus X 4.1
AU.21 **Avoiding CLI;** useful utilties otherwise only obtainable using CLI.
AU.22 **Text Plus;** Word Processor (v2.2) Professional quality program!
AU.23 **Word Wright;** Word Processor. Plus: Amiga Spell; Spell Checker!
AU.24 **Spectrum Emulator;** Run some Spectrum games on your Amiga!
AU.26 **Complete C Manual;** 11 chapters plus 70 executable examples! (3 disks)
AU.27 **Amibase** (v3.76); Professional quality, multi-featured database!
AU.29 **Mash Booter disk;** 20+ utils, Boot makers, editors, rippers...
AU.30 **Mash Booter disk 2;** 25+ utils IFF convert, Icon Maker etc.
AU.31 **Ghostwriter;** Popular, easy to use Intro and Demo Maker. (Mb)
AU.32 **Label Designer;** Design and print Black & White or Colour labels.
AU.33 **Nib;** Powerful Nibble Copier!
AU.35 **Quickbase;** Easy to use Database. Ideal for addressbook or similar!
AU.36 **Rainbow Writer;** Demo Maker, Scrolly text, 3D stars, various fonts, Font Edit, load soundtracker modules!
AU.37 **mCAD;** CAD package, Superb value for money, professional features!
AU.38 **Ultimate Icon Disk;** Great Icon creator, nice and easy to use!
AU.39 **Red Devils Utilities 6;** 30+ utilities! SID, Power Packer...
AU.40 **Red Sector Demo Maker;** Powerful program for creation of Demos (Mb)
AU.41 **Mandelbrot Generator;** Superb, written with AMOS language.
AU.42 **Rippers Guide;** Various Music and Graphic Rippers. Very good!
AU.43 **Master Virus Killer;** Ultimate in virus killers, detects over 124 different viruses & boot blocks! (*).
AU.45 **Slideshow Construction Kit;** easy to use Slideshow creator.
AU.46 **Home Utilities;** Wordwright, Word Processor. SCalc: Spreadsheet. Label print: Label printing utility.
AU.49 **Ripped Fonts & Logos;** colourful character sets extracted from various demos, use in your own demos/programs.
AU.50 **Picturesque;** Good art package.
AU.51 **Business Letters;** 600 plus to adapt and use in your word processor!
AU.52 **C64 Emulator;** latest version, hardware available separately! (*)
AU.53 **Speedbench;** load in 15 secs (*)

FONTS

AF.01 **Cosmopolitan;** Rangers, Peignet, Avant Guard, Aldous, Celtic etc...
AF.02 **Fancy;** Hollywood, Park Avenue, Broadway, Camelot, Courier, Ham...
AF.03 **Publishers;** Helvetica, Akashi, Andover, Bookman, Boxie, Times...
AF.04 **Various;** Unusual, Videofonts, Large & Small fonts....Utilities.

HELP!

AH.01 **Adventure Game Solutions;** More than 100 including: Dungeon Master, Future Wars, Ultima 1 to 5, Sierra, Infocom, Bards Tale, Zak MacKracken, Maniac Mansion, Rainbird...every adventure players dream! (2 disks)

DEMOS

AD.01 **Walker 1;** Digitised animation of Star Wars Imperial Walker (Mb).
AD.02 **Walker 2;** Digitised animation of Walker and helicopter! (Mb)
AD.04 **Probe Sequence;** Incoming video pictures from an interstellar probe landing on an alien planet! Amazing!
AD.18 **Puggs in Space;** Amusing cartoon of alien creature exploring Earth!
AD.21 **Busy Bee;** Amazing Sculpt 3D animation of a large flying Bee! (Mb)
AD.23 **Ship and Sphere;** Ray Trace film of space ship and glass sphere. (Mb)
AD.24 **NewTek Demo Reel 3:** Incredible professional demo, of sampled sounds, digitised animations..(Mb-2 disks)
AD.25 **The Run;** 3D film of Lotus chase through traffic with police car! (Mb)
AD.29 **Predators Megademo;** Brilliant demos including 2 games! (2 disks)
AD.32 **Vision Megademo IV;** Superb digitised music and sound effects!
AD.36 **Kefrens Megademo VIII;** 10 demos including; Kill the Beast (Shadow of the Beast meets Xenon 2)...(2 disks)
AD.39 **Agatron animations;** 3D film of USS Enterprise attacking USS Reliant.
AD.44 **Laurel and Hardy;** Digitised clips from various films! (2 disks)
AD.45 **Star Trek, Dry Dock demo;** The highly praised Ray Trace masterpiece!
AD.46 **Stealthy Manoeuvre II;** Cartoon style Stealth Fighter animation.
AD.47 **Walker Demo;** The incredible 2 Megabyte animation (2Mb-2 disks)
AD.48 **Amy V Walker;** Amy the Squirrel chases AT-AT with Monkey Wrench! (Mb)
AD.49 **Budbrain Productions;** Quality animations including Movie! (2 disks)
AD.50 **Budbrain Demo 2;** Great sound, great graphics, another classic!
AD.51 **Fishtank demo;** Animation of sea creatures miming in time to music!
AD.52 **Popeye meets Beach Boys;** Very amusing singing combination...
AD.53 **Iraq demo;** Mini film involving Saddam Hussain and John Major!
AD.54 **Simpsons;** Digitised: Do the Bartman plus great Bart slideshow!
AD.56 **Phenomena Megademo,** Tip to Mars; Fly around 3D landscape, Plus: Ray-Trace Fractal demo, Light Sourced World animation etc. GET THIS! (Mb)
AD.58 **Applecus;** Ray Traced apples replace beads on animated abacus! (Mb)
AD.59 **Plasmutex 91 by TFA;** Super Smooth animations! Truly Amazing!
AD.61 **Franklin the Fly;** Very amusing series of animations...(Mb)
AD.62 **Dating Game;** Eric Shwartz, very amusing animation. (3Mb - 2 disks) (*).
AD.63 **Batman,** Terminal & late night; three great Eric Shwartz anims. (Mb)
AD.64 **Shuttlecock;** E. Shwartz. (Mb) (*)
AD.65 **Stealthy Animations;** 3 great Eric Shwartz films. (Mb) (*).
AD.66 **Substance by Quartex;** Fractals, 3D animations, Ray Trace Bubbles. (*)
AD.67 **Interspace by Phenomena;** (*)
AD.68 **Universal Intensity Demo** (*)
AD.69 **Decaying Paradise Demo.** (Mb)
AD.70 **Global Trash by Silents;** Ray Traced Space Ship, superb plazma effects, 3D animations...Stunning!
AD.71 **Ice Megademo** by Silents (*)

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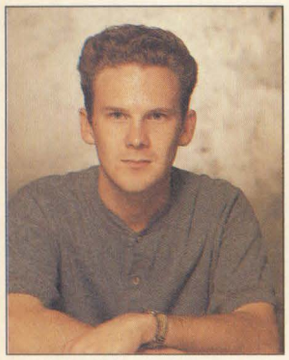
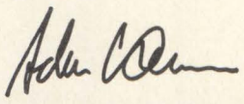


Welcome to the third issue of *Public Domain* and welcome too, to a brand new year.

Each new year signals a time to start afresh and we aim to make 1992 the time that *Public Domain* really takes off. We'll be working twice as hard to make the magazine better than ever before. (We'll have to – since we've gone monthly we've had twice the work-load to contend with!)

To put these changes into practice, we've been making New Year's resolutions in the *Public Domain* office. Art Editor Jacquie has resolved to be nicer to everybody and make the tea once in a blue moon. Production Editor Dave promises to get in on time in the morings and to wash occaisonally. Technical Editor Tim will be trying to learn English instead of his native Maori and keep his 'jokes' to himself. And me...? Erm, well, how do improve on (ahem) perfection?

1992 will be a great year for public domain and shareware too. I'm confident that we'll see a whole lot more high-quality programs come out as people get more aware of the possiblities of their machines. Stick with us – there's lots more to come.



THE PD TEAM – ISSUE 3

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CONT

6 Cover disk pages
What are you waiting for? Give your computer a New Year treat with some of the best PD around. **Plus:** how to find your way around *Public Domain*

12 News
You might be bursting with turkey sandwiches, but the public domain is bursting with news. Here's where you get your fill

16 Letters
Now that you can use your stamps for something other than thank you letters to your gran, why not write in to the most crucial PD forum in the country

18 Reviews: Programming & Utilities
The kids are bored with the shoot-'em-ups you gave them for Christmas, so now you can get back to some serious computing

30 Art and graphics packages
You too can be a pixel Picasso. There's plenty of graphics packages available as public domain and shareware. We show you what will bring out the best your palette has to offer

38 Reviews: Games
Fed up with those second-rate licences you got for Christmas? Don't fret! The antidote is in the public domain and we give the lowdown on what's around

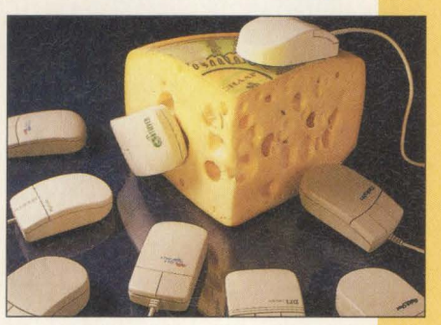
48 Disk magazines
It's cold and drizzly outside so what could be better than settling down for a good read? Diskzines are the ultimate fanzines for computer enthusiasts

53 Running a bulletin board
While you were knocking back the Xmas drinks, bulletin board sysops had to stay sober long enough to keep their boards running. Malcolm Burridge describes the life of the sysop

ENTS

Reviews: Business & Applications 56
If you want to make your business run more smoothly at a price you can afford then this is the section to check out

Mice round-up 69
Computers and mice go together like New Year's Day and a hangover. They're absolutely essential for graphics packages, games and a great deal more. You might think they're all the same, but you'd be wrong. We sort out the dirty rats from the really nice mice in our round-up



Reviews: Demos 74
Like Noel Edmonds' Christmas morning show, demos are essentially useless, but they're a lot more impressive. We review the demo scene

Emulators 86
You may be fed up to the back teeth with naff mimics on TV, but your computer is capable of some nifty impersonations itself

Competition 91
Enter our competition and you could replace your rodent with a really nice mouse courtesy of Naksha

Problem Solved! 92
Puzzled by public domain? If you have a problem with any aspect of public domain then ask the PDQ computer. It'll grind its cogs 'til it sorts you out!

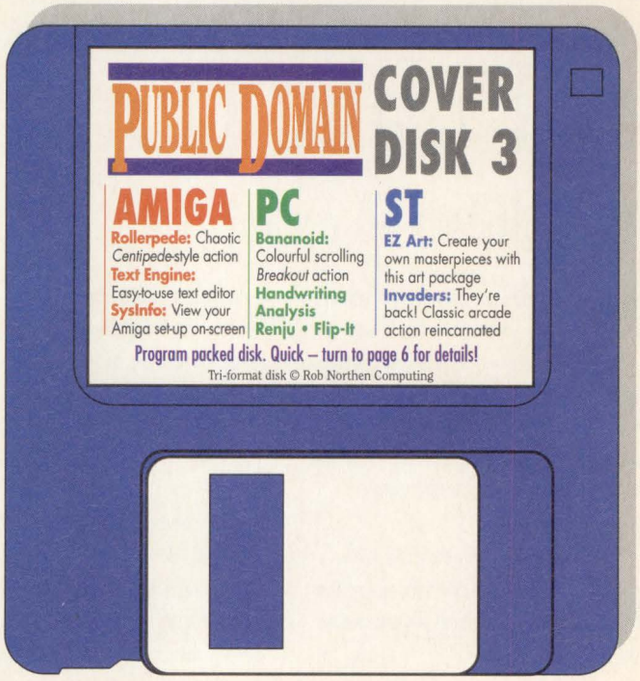
Reviews: Home & Education 94
The Christmas hols are over and its back to school, but check out what the public domain has to offer the knowledge-hunter first

Mail Order 103
A page packed with unmissable discount offers

Subscriptions 104
Don't trudge down to the newsagent's every month. Get *Public Domain* delivered to your door

Index 106
Every program reviewed in this issue listed so that you can locate them in an instant

COVER DISK NO.3


PUBLIC DOMAIN
COVER DISK 3
AMIGA
Rollerpede: Chaotic Centipede-style action
Text Engine: Easy-to-use text editor
SysInfo: View your Amiga set-up on-screen
PC
Bananoid: Colourful scrolling Breakout action
Handwriting Analysis
Renju • Flip-It
ST
EZ Art: Create your own masterpieces with this art package
Invaders: They're back! Classic arcade action reincarnated
Program packed disk. Quick – turn to page 6 for details!
Tri-format disk © Rob Northen Computing

Got an Amiga? ..... Turn to page 7.....

- **Rollerpede** **Frantic arcade action as the classic *Centipede* is brought up-to-date**
- **Text Engine** **Enter, edit and print your own text documents with this versatile text editor**
- **SysInfo** **Find out how your Amiga and its devices are configured**

Got a PC? ..... Turn to page 8.....

- **Bananoid** **Multi-coloured ball bouncing action for all VGA PCs**
- **Handwriting Analyst** **Want to find out what your signature really says about you? Then load this program for a computerised analysis!**
- **Flip-It** **If you like *Othello* you'll love this challenging computerised version of the classic strategy game**
- **Renju** **You've heard of *Connect 4*, how about Connect 5? More strategic action on your PC**

Got an ST? ..... Turn to page 9.....

- **EZ Draw** **Are you hiding your artistic talent? Could you be a digital Da Vinci? Load this program and draw your own conclusions...**
- **Invaders** **Those persistent aliens stage yet another invasion in this rendition of the original arcade blast-'em-up, here in style on the ST**

HOW TO USE THIS MAGAZINE

Making the most of Public Domain

What does it all mean?

● **Public Domain** is a generic term which at its simplest and purest level refers to non-copyrighted software which can be distributed freely. You can copy a public domain disk with no fear of breaking copyright laws. If you order disks from a library, then in theory you should only be charged for the distribution and copying costs.

Freeware is virtually the same as PD except that the author retains the copyright to his program and you are not allowed to alter the program in any way.

● **Shareware:** Operates on a try-before-you buy basis. Distributed in the same way as PD software (your mates can copy it), the difference being that if you like the program and intend to use it regularly you are required to send off a registration fee. This is usually fairly minimal, and often represents good value as some shareware programs rival commercial counterparts. Another form of shareware is bannerware. These programs are cut-down versions of commercial or shareware programs which are released into the public domain as a teaser, in the hope that it'll impress you so much you'll want to buy the full-priced versions.

● **Licenceware:** Not really PD at all, though it is usually distributed by the same libraries. Certain libraries are licensed to sell the software, and for every copy of the program sold the author receives a royalty. Licenceware cannot be copied freely among friends.

● **Otherware:** You might come across such terms as giftware, charityware and even chocolateware while browsing through library catalogues. These are usually pretty rare, and require you to send some sort of gift to the author (the clue is usually in the name) or some other organisation they have nominated.

Colour coding...

Being a multi-format magazine – we cover the ST, PC and Amiga in equal measure – there will be some sections that will be relevant to only one type of computer. So to make life easier we've colour-coded the magazine so that you tell instantly if a review or article will appeal to you...

Amiga All AMIGA-related articles are indicated in RED

PC All PC-related articles are indicated in GREEN

ST All ST-related articles are indicated in BLUE

Everything else should be of interest to everyone.

Where to get PD software

There are literally hundreds of public domain and shareware libraries around the country, and most of the programs we review are available from more than one of them. We give the name of the library that sent us the software for review, but if you see a program that takes your fancy it will probably be available from other libraries as well, so there's no harm in shopping around. And don't forget to check out the ads in this issue as well. There's an ad index at the back of the mag to help you find track down libraries.

If you run a PD library and you want a mention, then the best way to make sure you get one is to send us in some software!

Cover disk
Here it is, the third Public Domain cover disk. It's so full of software for the Amiga, ST and PC that your computer will never recover from this New Year's treat. This is all possible because of a custom disk format specially developed for Public Domain. Insert and enjoy!

Shareware Contributions

Please note that many of the programs on the public domain cover disk are shareware. You are therefore morally bound to pay the programmer a minimal shareware contribution if you decide to continue using their program. Full details on how to register your copy of the shareware utilities are included in the documentation files for each program. Do the decent thing.

Disk problems

We test the programs on the cover disk as thoroughly as possible. However, the custom format of the disk is very complicated. Should you experience difficulties with your disk, there are two courses of action to take, depending on the nature of the problem:

Disk won't load?

In the instance that you can't load *any* of the programs or an error occurs when you try to access the cover disk, chances are that you have an incorrectly duplicated disk. *Public Domain* is responsible for more copying than 70,000 disks, and of those it is possible that a few of them haven't been duplicated properly. If this sounds like the problem you've been experiencing, send the disk, together with an SAE to:

***Public Domain* February Disk, Disk Copy Labs, Unit A, Westmarch, London Road, Daventry, Northants NN4 4SA**

A replacement disk will be winging its way to you as soon as possible. Please note that is very important that if you send a disk to Disk Copy Labs you include information about what type of computer system you have so if there are any duplication problems they can be ironed out.

Program won't run?

One the other hand, if you have a problem with one or more of the *programs* on the disk, such as you can get them running but they crash or you can't access certain functions, then we'd like to hear about it. Write to us at the address below, detailing the problem. Information on the type of system and set-up you have could also be useful. Send these details to:

Cover Disk Problems, *Public Domain*, Future Publishing Ltd, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW

Getting Started

Before you attempt to use any of the Amiga programs on the *Public Domain* cover disk, we strongly advise that you make a back-up copy. Here's what to do:

1. Format a blank disk on to which you can transfer the programs. To do this, re-boot your machine (by pressing the Ctrl and the two 'Amiga' keys situated at each side of the space bar) and put your copy of the Workbench disk in the disk drive. When the Workbench screen comes up, take out your Workbench disk and insert the disk you want to format. Highlight that disk's icon by clicking on it, then hold down the right mouse button and move the cursor to the top of the screen. Select Initialise from the Disk menu and follow its instructions. Pretty soon have you'll have a blank disk.
2. Re-boot again and insert your cover disk in your disk drive.
3. The disk's icon, labelled Tri-Format Disk, will appear. Click on it with the mouse to display the programs on the disk. You should only run one program off the original cover disk: the program called *Backup*. Click on the *Backup* icon to run the program, and follow its instructions.
4. When you have made your back-up copy, put your original cover disk in a safe place. All of the programs can be run from the copied disk by double-clicking on the appropriate program's icon to open up its window, then on the file itself.

Rollerpede (PD)

Rollerpede, as its name so cunningly implies, is a version of the classic shoot-'em-up *Centipede*.

If you can't remember the original game, don't worry – *Rollerpede* is an accurate conversion, although it differs in one major way: it's better!

The idea of the game is to shoot and destroy the streams of aliens which move progressively down the screen. When they're shot they turn into what looks like mushrooms, as a consequence impeding the paths of the following 'pedes and making them move further down the screen to find a clear way through.

As you progress other meanies appear. Spiders start bouncing across the bottom of the screen, little creeping thingies fire upward-moving missiles, spaceships drop bombs on you and there are even guided missiles. And all this is going on at once!

Destroy a certain number of rollerpedes and you're on to the next level, and each level is more hectic than the last until there's more action happening on a single screen than all the *Rambo* films put together.

Please note: *Rollerpede* cannot be run from the Wokrbench desktop; you have to run it from the prompt which appears when you load the disk.

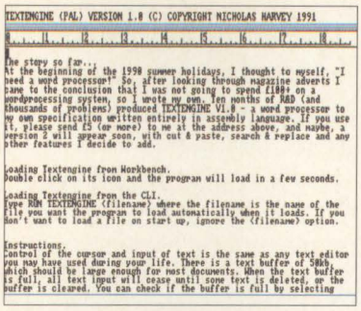
Surrounded by nasties, your ship has to dodge the rampant rollerpedes, enemy missiles and that strange triangular thing

Text Engine (Shareware)

It has been said that the word is mightier than the sword, and with the Amiga this is especially the case. If you want to do anything on this computer, such as edit a start-up sequence or create a batch file, you need a text editor (if you use a sword you'd just have to buy a new Amiga and start all over again). Sure, you could use the *Ed* tool on the standard Workbench disk, but unless you want to turn insane, a text editor is an essential tool.

Text Engine is one such tool, and a pretty useful one at that. It's not only capable of doing basic text functions, it can also print text in various styles, count the words (handy if you're a writer set with a strict word limit) and has word-wrap (that means that if you type a word and it you reach the end of the line before the word is complete the whole word will shunt down to the next line).

If you multitask your programs, *Text Engine* will suit you nicely – not only does it multitask but it also will go to 'sleep' if you so desire, freeing up some screen space and memory.


TEXTENGINE (PAL) VERSION 1.0 (C) COPYRIGHT NICHOLAS HARVEY 1991
The story so far...
At the beginning of the 1990 summer holidays, I thought to myself, "I need a word processor!" So, after looking through magazine adverts I came to the conclusion that I was not going to spend £100+ on a word-processing system, so I wrote my own. Ten months of ASD (and thousands of problems) produced TEXTENGINE V1.0 - a word processor to my own specification written entirely in assembly language. If you use it, please send £5 (or more) to me at the address above, and maybe, a version 2 will appear soon, with cut & paste, search & replace and any other features I decide to add.
Loading Textengine from Workbench.
Double click on its icon and the program will load in a few seconds.
Loading Textengine from the CLI.
Type RUN TEXTENGINE (filename) where the filename is the name of the file you want the program to load automatically when it loads. If you don't want to load a file on start up, ignore the (filename) option.
Instructions.
Control of the cursor and input of text is the same as any text editor you may have used during your life. There is a text buffer of 50kb, which should be large enough for most documents. When the text buffer is full, all text input will cease until some text is deleted, or the buffer is cleared. You can check if the buffer is full by selecting

***Text Engine*'s clear and uncluttered display makes editting text a breeze**

The program is limited to only 50K worth of text in memory at once, regardless of how much RAM you have. Printing is limited to the abilities of your printer, but you can set such things as NLQ (Near Letter Quality) and other fonts and typestyles from the main menus in the program itself.

The shareware registration fee for Text Engine *is £5, payable to: Nicholas Harvey, 149 Manor Road North, Thames Ditton, Surrey, KT7 0BQ.*

SysInfo (Shareware)

The Amiga is one of the most advanced computers on the market, and to try and keep up with the times it has gone through several model changes and upgrades. The original Amiga 1000 was joined by the Amiga 500 and 2000, then the 3000 and 1500 came along, and now we've got the Amiga 500 Plus. Along with these different models there were also changes to the Kickstart and Workbench operating systems.

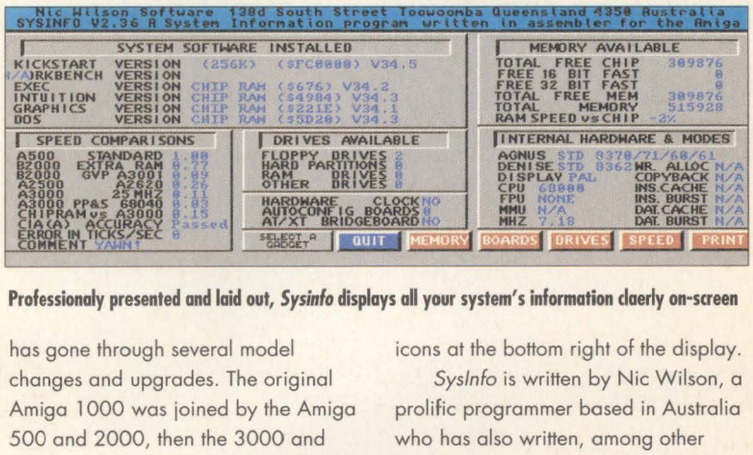
Keeping up with all these changes isn't always easy, not only because there have been so many, but because a lot of the hardware changes aren't always obvious unless you take the cover off the computer.

This may be an exciting prospect for the more technically-minded people out there, but for those of us reluctant to invalidate our warranties by opening the machine, there is an easier way of discovering how your Amiga is set-up – use *SysInfo*.

Not only does this tool tell you the usual things about you computer, such as how much memory it has available, *SysInfo* also displays other less well-known, but nevertheless useful, information such as:

- How your disk drive and other devices are configured
- How fast your machine is in comparison to other standard Amigas and those equipped with some of the more popular upgrades
- Whether the system contains any ECS (Enhanced Chip Set) chips
- What kind of processors (from 68000 to 68040) as well as any co-processors the system has, if any
- Whether you've got any Auto-Config boards, such as accelerator add-on cards, in your machine
- Plus other standard features such what version of Kickstart and Workbench you have

Most of these functions are displayed on the main screen that appears when the program first loads, but more detailed information can be reached by selecting one of the additional icons at the bottom right of the display.



Professionaly presented and laid out, *Sysinfo* displays all your system's information clearly on-screen

SysInfo is written by Nic Wilson, a prolific programmer based in Australia who has also written, among other things, the virus-killer utility *No Virus*. He's updated the program several times – which are detailed in the document file that accompanies the program – and indications are that he will continue to update it.

Shareware registration for SysInfo *is in the form of a donation (you pay what you think it's worth), payable to: Nic Wilson Software, 138d South Street, Toowoomba, Queensland 4350, Australia.*

COVER DISK – PC

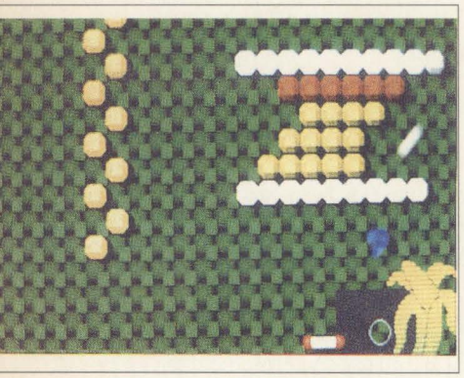
Bananoid (PD)

One of the most cloned and copied games ever has be *Breakout*. The infamous ball-bouncing brick-busting game has gone through a number of metamorphoses over the years, with features like detailed background screens and add-on 'weaponry' bringing it bang up to date.

Without doubt one of the best PC versions is *Bananoid*. Not only does it have the traditional features of the original, it adds several innovations, the most notable of which are its scrolling screens. Yes, the playfield is two screens wide, meaning that when you hit the ball outside the confines of the single screen, you have to chase it into the other.

Running Bananoid

Bananoid only works on PCs equipped with VGA graphics cards. To run the



It's bright, it's colourful, it's *Bananoid*, the craziest version of *Breakout* yet

game, insert your back-up copy of the cover disk into your floppy drive. Type

```
CD PC
```

to change to the PC directory and then

```
CD BANANOID
```

to get into the BANANOID directory. Finally, type

```
BANANOID
```

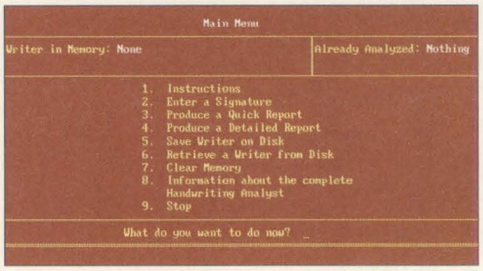
to run the game. Remember to press RETURN after each line.

Solitile solution

If you had a problem running *Solitile* on last month's cover disk, it might have been because we neglected to mention that the game only works on PCs equipped with EGA or VGA screens. Sorry!

Handwriting Analyst (Shareware)

What does your signature tell you about yourself? Is what it implies true? For years there have been people who claim to be able to tell you all about yourself just on the basis of how you


Main Menu
Writer in Memory: None
Already Analyzed: Nothing
1. Instructions
2. Enter a Signature
3. Produce a Quick Report
4. Produce a Detailed Report
5. Save Writer on Disk
6. Retrieve a Writer from Disk
7. Clear Memory
8. Information about the complete Handwriting Analyst
9. Stop
What do you want to do now? _

All *Handwriting Analyst*'s options are available from a simple menu screen – just follow them step by step

sign your name. Now there's *Handwriting Analyst* on the PC which can do the same job.

The computer doesn't actually read your signature. What it does is ask you questions about it, giving you multiple choice answers. For each question you decide which answer best describes your signature. The computer collates the answers and produces your analysis, which can be saved and sent to the printer or screen.

Whether you believe in graphology or not, hearing what *Handwriting Analyst* has to say about you can be fun, especially when there's a group of you around ("That's nothing like me", "You? Organised? Who's it trying to kid?" and all that sort of thing).

Running Handwriting Analyst

Insert your back-up copy of the cover disk into your floppy drive. Change to the PC directory by typing

```
CD PC
```

and then to get into the HAND directory, type:

```
CD HAND
```

And to run the program, type

```
START
```

Remember to press RETURN after each line. *Handwriting Analyst* has accompanying documentation.

The shareware registration fee for Handwriting Analyst *is $49.95 and should be sent to: Career Information and Software Associates, 2017 Cedar Street, Berkeley, CA 94709.*

Getting Started

Before you attempt to run any of the programs on the *Public Domain* cover disk, you must first back-up your disk. Don't worry – this isn't at all complicated. If you follow the instructions below, your cover disk will be backed up in no time.

1 Format a blank disk using the MSDOS Format command and keep it safe.

2 Next, write protect your cover disk – move the tab on the back so you can see through the hole.

3 Use the XCOPY command to make the back-up. With your system disk in drive A: enter the following command – `XCOPY A:\PC\*.* B: /W`. When prompted, insert your cover disk in drive A: and your freshly formatted disk in drive B:. If you're using a single drive system, XCOPY will treat your single drive as both A: and B: so just follow the on-screen prompts and you won't go far wrong.

4 If you want to back up this disk to hard drive, enter the following command – `XCOPY A:\PC\*.* C:/S`

Renju & Flip-It (Shareware)

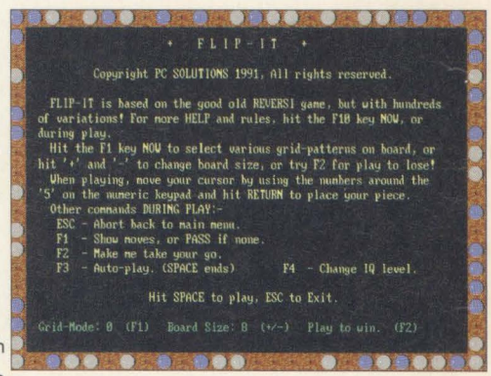
Coding team PC Solutions has come up with to excellent computer versions of classic baord games.

In *Renju*, which is based on Go, two playes take turns to place tiles on a board. The eventual winner is the person who is first to place five pieces in a row, either horizontally, vertically or diagonally.

Othello is the inspiration for *Flip-It*. Again this involves placing tiles on a baord but this time you can turn your opponent's pieces into your colour by surrounding them.

The best thing about both of them is that you don't have to find a friend to play with because your opponent is your computer, and with PC Solution's programming skills to back it up, it makes a pretty mean player (though you can set it to an easy evel if you get fed up with it beating you all the time).

The games look very similar, and indeed have virtually the same game options: choice of board size and auto-play (where the computer plays itself), for example.


FLIP-IT
Copyright PC SOLUTIONS 1991, All rights reserved.
FLIP-IT is based on the good old REVERSI game, but with hundreds of variations! For more HELP and rules, hit the F10 key NOW, or during play.
Hit the F1 key NOW to select various grid-patterns on board, or hit '+' and '-' to change board size, or try F2 for play to lose!
When playing, move your cursor by using the numbers around the '5' on the numeric keypad and hit RETURN to place your piece.
Other commands DURING PLAY:-
ESC - Abort back to main menu.
F1 - Show moves, or PASS if none.
F2 - Make me take your go.
F3 - Auto-play. (SPACE ends)
F4 - Change IQ level.
Hit SPACE to play, ESC to Exit.
Grid-Mode: 8 (F1) Board Size: 8 (+/-) Play to win. (F2)

Both *Flip-It* and *Renju* have pretty much the same gameplay options – not surprising as they come from the same team

Running Renju/Flip-It

To run the game, insert your back-up copy of the cover disk into your floppy drive. Type

```
CD PC
```

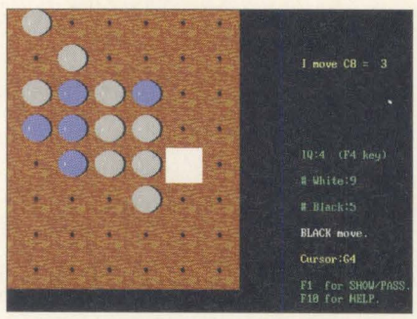
to change to the PC directory and then

```
CD RENJU
```

(or `CD Flip-It`) to get into the the directory of the game you want to play. Finally, type:

```
RENJU14
```

(or `FLIP14`) to run the game. Remember to press RETURN after each line. All the instructions on how to play *Renju* and *Flip-It* can be found on the accompanying documentation.



The rules of *Renju* might be simple, but the game is incredibly addictive so load it at your peril

---

Registration for Renju *and* Flip-It *is unusual in that you are required to buy one of the packs of games produced by the makers of the games, PC Solutions. These range in price from £5.95 to £7.95 and details of them are contained within the program. Write to: PC Solutions, PO Box 954, Bournemouth BH7 6YJ.*

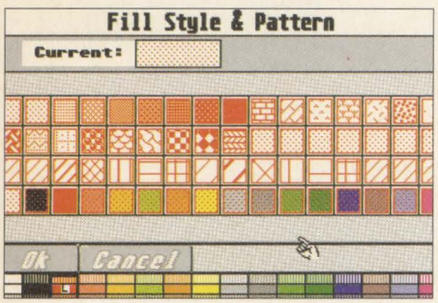
Getting Started

Before you attempt to use any of the programs on the *Public Domain* cover disk, we strongly advise you to make a back-up of your copy of the cover disk. Here's how:

1. Format a blank disk.
2. Write protect the original *Public Domain* cover disk and insert it into the internal drive. Double click on the drive A icon and select the ST drawer icon and drag it across onto the drive B icon. If you have twin drives, then insert your blank disk into drive B and proceed.
3. If you only have a single drive, follow the on-screen dialogue boxes until the disk is successfully backed up. This will take a fair bit of disk swapping, but be patient.

EZ Art (PD)

To famous artists like Michaelangelo, Da Vinci and Tony Hart paint was the normal way of implementing their artistic abilities. Nowadays, though, it is computers which are becoming more involved in the artistic process, introducing many young kids to art before they can even write. As computers have become more graphically advanced so too have art programs, taking advantage of the improved resolutions and vastly increased colour palettes.

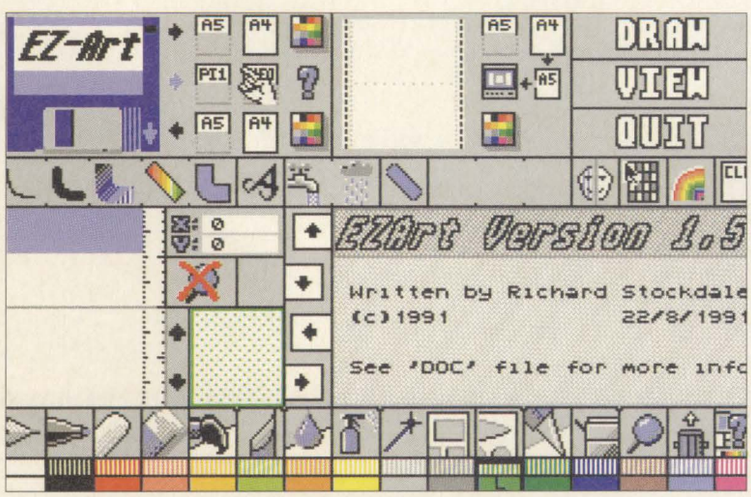


This select screen lets you choose from a wide range of fill patterns to use in your graphical masterpieces and is a typical of *EZ Art*'s flexibility

So if you're interested in getting the most out of your ST's graphics you should try playing around with an art package. You only have to read our feature on graphics packages (starting on page 30) to see how much can be accomplished with them. And you're in for a real treat, because we've put one of the best and most versatile PD ST graphics packages, *EZ Art*, on our cover disk.

Some of *EZ Art*'s features include:

- The facility to fill objects in two ways – as an area of solid colour, or a pattern that can incorporate the background colour
- The use of three shades of 16 colours to give the illusion of 48 colours on-screen
- A Zoom mode for detailed pixel-by-pixel editing
- Help information displayed on-screen
- A choice of A4 or A5 page sizes, as well as A5 or A4 screen dumping and the ability to save either page to disk
- A chalk mode which creates even more shades of colour
- The facility to move blocks of graphics from one part of the screen to another
- A gridlock function that enables precise drawing by positioning a crosshead-type grid over the cursor
- A four-way mirroring function, covering both horizontal and vertical mirroring effects as well as on a diagonal axis
- The facility to allow for different colour palettes to be loaded or saved separately from the main picture
- The ability to import files created with the *Neochrome* and *Degas* art packages, which are two of the most popular graphic file formats on the ST



In the main option screen of *EZ Art* you can customise the features to suit your particular needs

All of these functions can be accessed via icons at the bottom of the screen some of which give you access to further sub-menus.

So, what are you waiting for? Get painting, now!

Running EZ Art

Before you do anything, it is vital to make a back-up copy of the cover disk (see the box elsewhere on this page for details on how to back-up the disk).

Once you've made a copy, click on the ST folder and then the EZART folder. *EZ Art* will only run in the ST's low resolution mode, so change to that mode if you aren't already in it.

To run *EZ Art*, click on the EZART1_5.PRG icon.

There is another file on the disk which contains a run-down of *EZ Art*'s features. To see this, click on the file called EZART1_5.DOC and then click on Show or Print to display the file on-screen or to print it out. If you want to view the document on-screen, change to medium resolution otherwise the file is almost unreadable.

Invaders (PD)

Back in the late 70s and early 80s the video game everyone was talking about was *Space Invaders*. This original blast-'em-up brought computer games to the attention of the public for the first time, introducing this new form of entertainment to millions of people.

While technology has progressed over the years, and arcade games have become more advanced and altogether more popular, this hasn't dampened the appeal of the original *Space Invaders*. Other games may look better, but do they play better? (The answer, in case you're wondering, is no!)

Invaders is an excellent version of the classic game, here reincarnated on the ST. This version hasn't been totally left behind technologically by other PD games, either – you have the choice of playing it in classic or modern modes. In classic mode the graphic style is faithful to the original *Space Invaders* arcade machine (blocky but nostalgic), while the modern mode has a much more up-to-date visual style.

Pure arcade entertainment! You can either play *Invaders* in this familiar classic mode or an up-to-date version with new graphics

But some thing's never change. The basic idea is the same as ever: shoot the marauding aliens before they either shoot you or reach the surface of your planet. You have four bases that provide some shelter from the missiles, but these are gradually destroyed by the missiles fired by both you and the aliens. Ah, the memories flood back.

Running Invaders

Before you do anything, make a copy of the cover disk (see the box elsewhere on this page for details on how to back-up the disk).

Once you've made a copy, click on the ST folder and then the INVADERS folder icon.

Once you've opened up that folder, simply click on the INVADERS.TOS file and you're ready to start your alien assassinations.

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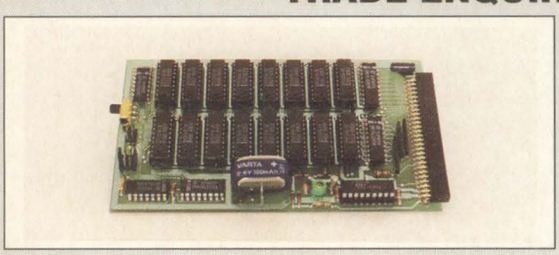

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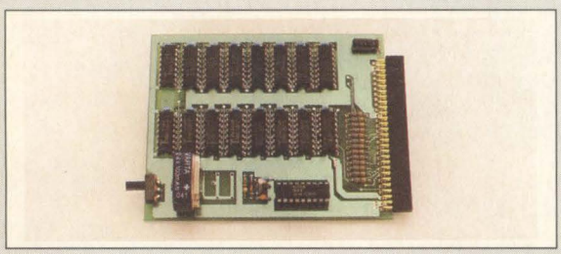

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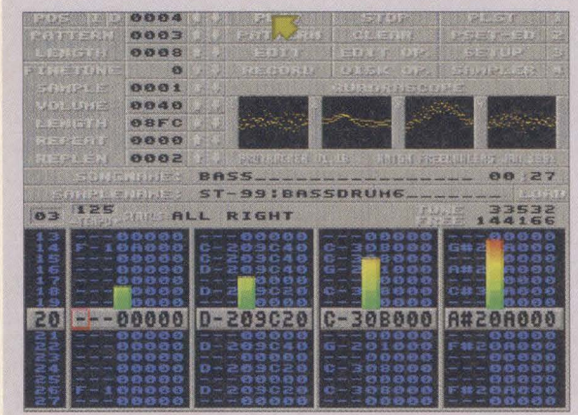
The sound of samples

Users of the popular Amiga music utilities *Protracker, Noisetracker* and *Soundtracker* can now make use of a collection of samples created especially to work with these



When you partner *Protracker* with *Screaming Miggy 001* your Amiga could be the next best thing in drum machines

tools. Them! Productions has released Screaming Miggy 001, a disk containing over 150 samples.

These consist mainly of percussion instruments, many of which have been sampled from compact discs. The company is currently compiling other disks in the series which will contain speech, instrument, chord and sound effect samples, as well as complete *'tracker* modules.

If you want further details, then contact **Them! Productions at: PO Box 756, Rutherglen, Glasgow G73 1BT ☎ 041-647 3318**

What's new?

Perhaps surprisingly, the winter season has brought with it something of a downturn in terms of PD releases. It seems that the cold weather hasn't resulted in programmers staying indoors creating new wares, or if it has they haven't released many yet.

Unfortunately, with this shortage of new software some PD libraries have taken to re-releasing old programs, either calling them something completely different, or just taking them off older disks and calling them new.

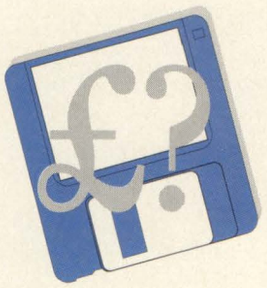
Some examples of this include the release of *AmigaFox*, the Amiga DTP package, which has been taken off an early Fish disk.

Here in the *Public Domain* office we're receiving old demos and programs that are being treated as new releases by some PD companies. This appears to be for the benefit of new Amiga owners who the companies believe should be given the opportunity of discovering these old releases. But not only are long-time users buying the disks mistakenly thinking that they are new products, these old demos are also likely to be incompatible with the new Amiga, the 500 Plus. So be warned.

DISK SHORTAGE COULD LEAD

A world-wide shortage of 3.5-inch floppy disks could result in a price increase for public domain and shareware software.

The shortage appears to be the result of a number of disk manufacturers in the West having closed down in the last few months. Another view is that the disk manufacturers are concentrating on



producing high density disks instead of the standard low density variety, which they can make a greater profit from. And a more cynical view expressed by some companies *Public Domain* has spoken to suggests that the disk suppliers are just releasing small quantities of the disks to push prices up.

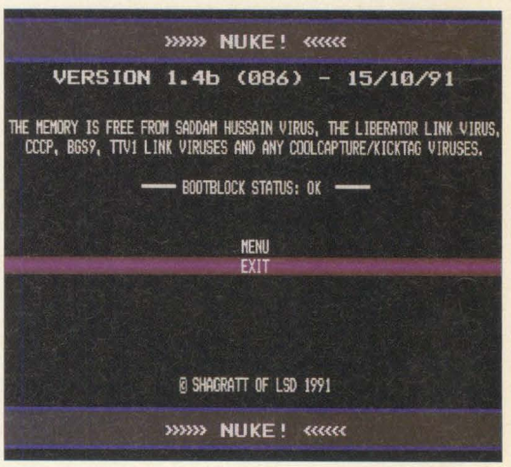
Whatever the reason, the shortage has meant that companies are having to depend on supplies from the Far East, and these disks are not expected to arrive in bulk in the UK until

Nuke disarmed

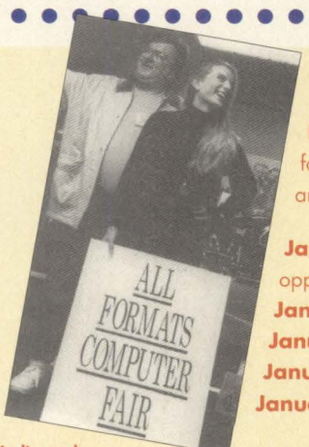
The *Saddam* virus-seeking virus killer utility does not work, according to a leading PD watch dog association.

The Public Domain Standards for Distribution, through its involvement with the UK Virus Research Centre, has discovered that the latest version of *Nuke*, 1.4b, incorrectly identifies standard DOS disks as being infected with the *Saddam* virus. A bug has also crept into *Nuke* which has resulted in the utility not preventing the *Saddam* virus entering the computer's memory, even when *Nuke* is just checking disks.

These bugs render *Nuke* useless, as its prime function is to detect and prevent viruses...


»»»» NUKE! «««
VERSION 1.4b (086) - 15/10/91
THE MEMORY IS FREE FROM SADDAM HUSSAIN VIRUS, THE LIBERATOR LINK VIRUS, CCCP, BGS9, TTV1 LINK VIRUSES AND ANY COOLCAPTURE/KICKTAG VIRUSES.
BOOTBLOCK STATUS: OK
MENU
EXIT
© SHAGRATT OF LSD 1991
»»»» NUKE! ««««

The latest version of the *Nuke* virus tool apparently fails to do the job it's supposed to: it doesn't kill the *Saddam* virus



Ladies and gentlemen, I present my daughter! Free with each box of ten disks sold...

Let's go to the Fair

Bargain hunters rejoice: the first 1992 dates and venues for the All Formats Computer Fairs have been announced. They are as follows:

January 11 – Midlands: Motorcycle Museum, J6 M42, opposite the Birmingham NEC
January 12 – University Sports Centre, Leeds
January 18 – Horticultural Hall, Westminster, London
January 19 – Brunel Centre, Templemeads, Bristol
January 26 – Scotland: City Hall, Candleriggs, Glasgow

As usual, the Fairs run from 10 am to 4 pm and admission costs £4. For more info, to obtain advance tickets or to book a stand, get in touch with **John Riding on 0225 868100.**

MAIN NEWS ➡➡➡ PUBLIC DOMAIN NEWS ➡➡➡ PUBLIC DOMAIN

TO PRICE INCREASES

February, by which time the demand for them will have dropped because of the time of year.

According to David Hartley of Disk Copy Labs, a disk duplication company which in the last month has duplicated over a million disks for Future Publishing alone, the shortage, "will last until enough trading arrangements have been set-up with the Far East".

In the meantime, because the disks are in short supply their wholesale price has increased. As most PD and shareware companies have small margins on the software they sell, the added cost of the disks could be reflected in the price of the software.

This doesn't appear to be the case with some of the larger PD companies who have their own stable supplies of disks, but for smaller companies the shortage is more worrying.

If you're going to buy any PD or shareware software in the next month or so it would be a good idea to contact the supplier before you send any money.

Some companies have increased their prices in spite of disk shortages because postage prices have gone up in the last two months.

A500 Plus upgrade update

Owners of the new Amiga 500 Plus computer, as detailed in last month's issue of *Public Domain*, may have a solution as far as running older, previously incompatible software is concerned.

By using a ROM sharer the Amiga 500 Plus can have both its own Kickstart 2.0 on-board as well as the older Kickstart 1.3, enabling it to run software written for the older Amigas. Access to either Kickstart can be achieved by the flick of a switch.

Such a ROM sharer is available from Phoenix, costing £24.99 for the basic hardware, with the essential Kickstart 1.3 ROM costing £29.99.

If you want to find out more information, contact **Phoenix ☎ 0532 311932.**

MessyDOS no longer PD

The latest version of MessyDos, the program that enables your Amiga to read from and write to disks formatted with the PC's MS-DOS, is no longer public domain.

Earlier versions of the program, up to version 1.3, remain in the PD, although they will not be supported by the program's author, Olaf Seibert.

The earlier versions were quite difficult to set-up and use, however programs such as *MessySID* (reviewed on page 18 of this issue) have made *MessyDOS* more usable. Because *MessySID* uses a PD version of the tool, it will not be affected by the new commercial version.

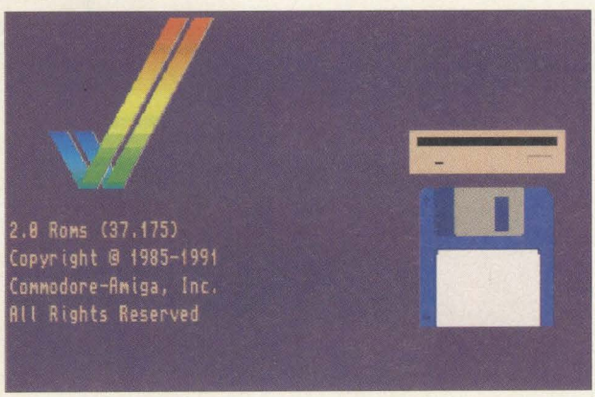
At present no UK distributor has been announced for the tool, but it is distributed in Germany by Maxom, costing 59DM (about £20).

Official Commodore upgrade

Commodore has announced its official Workbench 2 upgrade pack which will enable older Amigas to run software specifically created for the latest version of the operating system.

The pack costs £79 and contains the Kickstart 2.04 ROM, three Workbench 2.0 disks, as well as the appropriate manuals.

To find out more, you can phone Commodore UK on **0628 770088.**



Owners of older Amigas will soon be able to officially upgrade to the Kickstart 2.0 ROM chip, enabling their machines to run software written for the Amiga 500 Plus, which should be a relief to PD fans

Pacific PD moving down under

Pacific PD, the Wigan-based Amiga public domain company, is to move its offices to New Zealand in January.

The company will now supply Amiga software to those PD-starved Kiwis, at the same time supporting Amiga owners in Australia.

Currently there are over 1,900 disks in the Pacific PD catalogue and the company has retained its links with a number of UK PD software companies, ensuring a ready supply of new releases for the antipodeans.

If you're interested in getting in touch with Pacific PD, write to: **PO Box 737, Thames, New Zealand.**

Pacific PD's UK office, at **PO Box 25, Wigan, Lancashire WN2 3WW,** will close down in January.

PSD expanded

The Public Domain Standards for Distribution association, as announced in last month's issue, has now expanded in size. Currently the member-list consists of: Essex Computer Systems, Goldstar Computers, Start Computers, Blitterchips, A Bit on the Side, Déjà Vu, Potteries and Office Choice.

For further details, contact Essex Computer Systems at: **118 Middle Crockerford, Basildon, Essex SS16 4JA. ☎ 0268 553963.**

Public Domain on-line

In the spirit of true public domain and grass-roots user-oriented computing, *Public Domain* is now on-line with our own message areas on a number of bulletin board systems (BBSs). Now if you want to get in touch with us you can call the following BBSs:

Bath BBS – 0225 840060
01 For Amiga – 071 3771358

To reach us, just leave a message to 'Public Domain'. We're looking for your thoughts and comments on the magazine itself, plus any other news, tips and problems you have about the PD and shareware software scene in general. And if you've got a program you'd like to see reviewed, you could upload it to us.

Of course, if you haven't got a modem you're more than welcome to drop us a line on paper...

We want your news

Public Domain is always on the look-out for any news or snippets of information related to the world of public domain and shareware software.

If you've heard anything interesting – and you needn't be a company either – then we'd like to hear from you. We're interested in news about anything, whether it's good, bad or ugly (although we don't really want to be told about Bernard Manning) and we'll follow the story up in our next issue.

So, if you've got any suitable information drop us a line at: **News, *Public Domain*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.**

ST and AMIGA P.D. from only 90P a disk

SPECIAL OFFER
10 Bulk DSDD Disks for £2.99
if purchased with 20 PD Disks

ST PD

SMEG PACK 1 (games)
ROBOTZ (868) 40 level arcade
AYATOLLA (544) combat terrorists
FRUIT MACHINE (847) simulator
COMPUTER PINBALL (531)
TALESPIN (576) adventure
WIZZARD'S LAIR (519) adv.
MAKE A BREAK (781) trivia game
FLYOVER (403) bombing game
ESCAPE FROM THE TOMB OF RA (409)
CHESS (419)

SMEG PACK 2 (games)
UNDER BERKWOOD (780) massive adv.
MUTANT (410) vert scrolloing arc.
MARS MAZE (413) platform
COMPANY (421) business simulation
MOTORBIKE (422) bike sim.
TARK (423) D & D adventure
BATTLE FOR THE THRONE (467) adv.
THE NAME GAME (418) as in The Sun
YAHTZY (764)
ENGLAND TEAM MANAGER (548) football

SMEG PACK 3 (games)
DARKNESS IS FOREVER (563) adv
STOCKMARKET (529) whealing & dealing
EXPLODE (855) arcade
FLOYD THE DROID (528) shoot'em up
AIR WARRIOR (530) flight sim.
VIRUS (710) save the CPU
JITTERBUG (402) catch the aliens
TRACKER (406) destroy the enemy
OVERLANDER (407) shoot'em up
CHANCE (408) defeat the archons

SMEG PACK 4 (games)
DERRICK THE DRIOD (452) blast'em
STEEL (414) scrolling shoot'em up
LLAMATRON (449) shoot'em up
SKULLDUGGERY (507) collect gems 100 levs
INVASION (562) adv on a spaceship
EMPIRE BUILDER (761) property developer
DIE ALIEN BLOB (566) great shoot'em up
ATOMS, KILLERCHESS, AMMOTRACK (508)
SCANNER (511) checkers type.
WHEEL OF FORTUNE (416) based on TV prog

SMEG PACK 5 (demos)
MEGABANG, ROBOMIX, MAGICEYES *D* (588)
MICROMIX, STINGRAY, BALLIT *D* (589)
SLAYATANIC CULT I & II *D* (569)
DEFINATIVE DEMO by TLB *D* (568)
LIFE'S A BITCH *D* (586)
BAT DEMO, MICROMIX II, FUJIBONK *D* (587)
TRANSYLVANIA DEMO by TLB *D* (593)
SOUND CONNEXIONS DEMO *D* (594)
THE NEW YEAR DEMO by TCB *D* (595)
THE DELERIOUS DEMO *D* (567)

UTILITIES

302 DAs inc. clock, calculator with Hex/Dec convn, free Ram checker, 2 games. Watch DA.
881 100% IBM compatible formatter - 3.5" & 5.25" for DOS/TOS. Manual pager, a way for Unix techies to produce documentation. MEGA formatter.
383 DR FLOPPY, disk sector editor, SCODE makes ASCII for easy data transfer. FORMAT plus. SORT, string sorting.+ more
746 SUPER V KILLER is a utility that detects 5 different viruses, 7 anti-viruses & 133 other types of boot sector.
751 SUPERBOOT V6.0 THE latest version of this utility for controlling your ST. Plus a good selection of other utilities.
439 GEMDOS USERS GUIDE, a disk full of information about GEMDOS. Excellent value
572 GEM PLUS. This is a great variant of Neodesk. Alter desktop icons, design your own, and do the same with progs.
381 dbMAN tutorial. Visicalc style spreadsheet. Disk formatter. Multi-purpose file print util. Mramdisk.acc.
882 CHK 2.3 - Disk checker. Desktop Manager v2.1. IBM MODIFIER alters DS Atari disks so that an IBM can read them.
885 PROMOUSE self-adjusting mouse accelerator. RATTRAP locks out menus. TURBODOS. MAXIDISK reset proof Ramdisk.
385 68000 assembler, an Address/Mailing list, an Autodial Utility. Label printer + more.
824 PICSWITCH 7 change resolution. Hi-Res & Colour emus. BBOOT boot B drive. SWITCHER - 2 progs in memory. FSEL 5.5.
517 STE BOOTUP, boot up utility for STE's, go straight into medium res.
886 DIY DEMO, Make demos, features titlescreen & scrolling message.
836 BICLOCK to set time/date. Coder Set printer from desktop. MONOEMU v5.0.
324 ADDRESS LOG, On this disk there's a limited address book & label printer, a disk catalogger that auto disk directories etc.
857 DISKMECH powerful disk analyser/archiver/ editor with full docs.
884 AMC GDOS, Atari's replacement for GDOS, used the same. ARC SHELL v1.98. DISK TOOLBOX v2.03. HYPERFORMAT v2.56
584 MOUSE TRICKS, a .ACC that gives the user extensive control over mouse movement & menu. QuickST Speeds screen output.

FULL BUDGIE RANGE STOCKED - GAMES (BU)£2.95 PRODUCTIVITY DISKS (PRO)£3.95

sim - simulation plat - platform arc - arcade

BU02 FOOTBALL 88 sim	BU05 PRODARTS sim	BU08 SPECULATOR sim
BU11 MAELSTROM arc	BU14 GOLDRUSH plat	BU17 MAKE A BREAK quiz
BU18 PARABELLUM plat	BU21 IMPULSE arc	BU23 SPACE BLOB plat
BU26 CARRIER ATTACK battleships	BU31 INFERNO boulderdash	
BU33 CRYSTAL CAVERNS caves adv	BU34 SAFE AS HOUSES board	
BU36 DOGFIGHT arc	BU41 EXODUS arc	BU38 BUDGIES CROSSWORDS
BU43 THE VILLAGE adv	BU44 EXTERMINATE arc	BU51 SPACE DUEL arc
BU58 BERT THE SQUIRT plat, excellent !		BU54 AUTORAMA racing
BU61 DIZZY LIZZY II	BU65 DOUGLAS 2	BU68 BLACKSCAR MOUNTAIN
PRO1 ELECTRONIC BANK STATEMENT V1.3 *D*		PRO3 SPRITE MASTER
PRO5 THE SPRITES PORTFOLIO V1.1 *D*		PRO7 MUZEXX MAKER *D*
PRO10 CLASSROOM MATHS	PRO12 ASTROLOGY	
PRO17 SPLASH - ART PACKAGE FOR 3-10YEAR OLDS		PRO18 FUN TIME - 3-7 YEARS

843 AUTOGEM autoboots any Gem program when booting. XFORMAT2 extended formatter & VC Spreadsheet.
883 MX-2 v2.3 a multi-tasking & user environment, allowing up to 7 concurrent tasks such as compiling, printing, etc. *D*
842 DEC edit clone, Disk engineer v3.01 Do almost anything to a disk via GEM

GRAPHIC, FONT AND ART/DRAWING DISKS

375 FONTEDIT v3.0, Editor & loaders for Ram & downloaded fonts. Inc. are a number of fonts, font data disassembler
578 ST GRAPH. A comprehensive graph, handles Bar, Horizontal/Stacked Bar, Line & Dot Charts.
376 FONTS2, Screen & desktop fonts. Columbia, Devoll, Hudson, Saturn, Spokane,. Thames & Universal Roman.
876 DELUXE FONTMASTER v2.0 Print a large choice of original fonts on an Epson/IBM/NEC compatible printer. *MD*
388 A Pics disk includes Mona Lisa, Moon, ST keyboard, Planet, Yoohoo, Saturn.
803 Amiga & Macpaint pic files plus PICSWITCH which can read Neo, Degas, etc.
808 FRACKTAL is a fractal drawing program from Germany. Fractal landscape prog.
850 FONTKIT 3.31 An excellent font program. * D *
880 COLOURBURST 3000 v0.2, This program allows you to add different colours to pictures from other packages. *CX*
888 ANI-ST, animation system. You draw the initial & final shapes & the ST draws the ones in between. Full docs.
396 MASTERPAINT, A great drawing package with some excellent features & it works in Mon & Col. LITTLE PAINTER
540 PUBLIC PAINTER An excellent art package. German but not hard to master. * M *
820 SNOOPY, 25 cartoons with displayer *C*
571 GRAPHS disk. Full of utilities for printing graphs. TOP CHART.
577 PALART. Excellent art program with full docs on disk. Excellent features. *C*
442 ST CAD v2.1, a medium or High res CAD package. Full docs. CALCPLOT, scientific calculator and function plotter.
393 THE ARTIST, A great drawing package with all the normal options. * M *
469 JILCAD, a good shareware CAD package. Lots of features (2D)Add-ons available. *XD*
471 FONTS, Calamus PD fonts from USA. Advert, Babyteth, Barnum, Carolina, Casual, Celtic, Chancery Bold, Chancery + others *D*

MUSIC

875 COMPOSER, music creation, uses ST's soundchip or midi interface, with drum kit etc. There is also a player program.
720 - MUSIC WRITER, create music on screen, Also Sound Chip Controller.
721A-B SOUNDTRACKER PLAYER & MODULES. ZOWEE, TIMDEMO, AUSIFOOT, GRILLED MUSIC1, more * 2 Disks ! !
536 CASIO CZ SOUNDS & EDITOR, 2 Casio CZ series synthesizer editors/librarian programs.
753 XBIOS Music Construction Kit, a powerful song editor.
754 PERCUSSAMAN is a 4 track, 16 instrument, digitally synthesised sequencer.
750 SOUNDTRACKER PLAYER & MODULES. D-DREAD1, D-DREAD2, PAT-MIX, RVB_DEMO, SPREAD.
767 MICHAEL JACKSON - BAD, digitised sampled sound & great graphics.
466 GHETTOBLASTER, a simple but enjoyable demo designer. LOW RES.
477 MFP, music design package from Yugoslavia. Comprehensive package in English *DX*

PROGRAMMING/LANGUAGE DISKS

702 STOS SOUND FX CREATOR, Create sound effects for STOS games in the format of STOS banks.
312, 313 & 314, C LANGUAGE DISKS 1, 2 & 3 of Elementary C, a set of 3 disks of program to illustrate to the beginner the use of 'C'. Each prog includes C source code.
361 A 68000 Assembler, selection of progs in FORTH-83, ST Logo, ST Basic & OSS Pascal.
813 PROGRAMMING EDITORS, 3 editors, CONTEXT v2, PRO-ED and P-EDIT. Docs.
887 SOZOBON C, Probably the best PD C compiler.
759 SPRITE EDITOR. Create & save your own sprites. Excellent Sprite design program that has several fast & flexible routines.
440 C TUTORIAL, superb disk manual that provides an excellent intro to C programming.
474 GNU GDB, source level debugger. SZ ADB, M/C debugger for SOZOBONC.*D*
475 MKRSC GEM resource construction util.
476 MODPAS, Pascal Compiler, docs. *D*

COMMUNICATIONS DISKS

364 PACK-ET-TERM v3.3A, a great radio package. YARP split screen RTTY terminal.
752 VANTERM 3.71 & 3.8 is just about the best PD Communications package around

APPLICATIONS - SPREADSHEETS, DATABASES ETC

826 DATABASE I, GEM driven database. Easy to use & learn. Online help screens.
827 ST SHEET. This is a very good quality spreadsheet. Can be used as a Desk Accessory. *C*.
873 B/STAT v 2.01 This is a sophisticated graphing & statistical analysis program *D*.
874 OPUS v2.2. This program is a GEM based spreadsheet & charting program *DX*.
543 WG DATA, database, custom screen layout for data input. Comprehensive docs.
537 DOUBLE SENTRY, Accounting prog. A fully working accounts package that covers all aspects except VAT.
755 PERSONAL DTB is a database for storing your names & addresses & creating labels or personalise mail shots.
541 INVENTORY PRO v2.0 is a fully featured stock control system. Very powerful.
432 TCOS database that allows data to be structured in a tree arrangement.
433 ZAPCARD, easy to use card type database. Allows upto 1024 cards. BANKER Simular to Lotus 123. Comprehensive docs.

WORDPROCESSING & DESKTOP PUBLISHING

727ATEX, 6 DISK PACK, Includes TEX the document processor & typesetting system. Comes with it's own programming language, handles graphics & equations with ease. Comes with 114 fonts in 28 styles. Full documentation ***** 6 DISKS !!! ***** *DM*
835 1ST WORD Wordprocessor. Fully GEM based professional wordprocessor.
831 (SS)841(DS) EASY TEXT v1.2- Fully working DTP demo program. Fully Gem orientated using the WYSIWYG presentation. 21 page manual on disk. The only difference between this and the fully working version is that this will only print 1/4 of a page at a time.
363 ST WRITER ELITE,v3 the latest release of ST WRITER. It's a superb PD Wordprocessor with text files, docs, etc.

CLIP ART

738 Humorous clips + individual letters A-Z.
736 More Arrows, Artdeco, Breakfast, cups/glasses & more kitchen parts.
737 Babies, Boys & girls.
739 More Girls, Scrolls & Occasional clips.

GAMES

799 BOMB OUT BROTHERS, Compilation disk No.1. MAD MOLE, great version of the Boulderdash, LASER RACE, defeat enemy laser cars in the arena.. ALIEN BLOCKADE, based upon the arcade game QIX.
532 ADVENTURE SOLUTIONS 1 - Solutions to over 25 advs. Crowley Manor, Amazon, Zork 3A, 2B & 3,Enchant, + others.
705 HARRIS WENT SKIING, You have to get Harris across a busy road to buy Skis.
326 Arcade games including Warzone, Daleks, Haunted House & Mouseness.
317 The games on this disk are Battleships, Checkers, Maze(.ACC), Megaroids(Mono) Pool.
345 PUZZLE PUZZLE, jigsaw puzzle games from Germany.*M*
891 SUPERBREAKOUT, There are over 40 brick types all with special features.*M*
554 NAPOLEON, conquer europe. * M *
762 RUSH, rush around moving bricks in order to create a way out for the ball. Game where you head butt attacking rats.
742 TREASURE SEARCH, find the hidden treasure.*D*
582 STUMPED play international cricket, Control of team selection *D*
344 BALLER, arcade castle & cannons game. *M*
309 ADVENTURE WRITING SYSTEM
553 1ST SERVE TENNIS, tennis simulation
766 TUNNEL VISION, A great maze game
552 BERMUDA RACE 2, The challenge is to sail to Bermuda.
580 LEAGUE SOCCER, Play the full league programme week by week. Full control over player selection.
351 HACK 1, a Dungeons & Dragons text adventure with graphic maps.
581 TOP OF THE POP, Climb up the Top 50
507 SKULDUGGERY, Mono/Colour, Guide a cave mite around caverns collecting diamonds. 100 levels. BLASTER defender clone.
347 SPACEWAR is a good arcade game. FIRESTORM, uses the mouse. AZARIAN shoot 'em up, beat the invading Thraxx
349 SOLITAIRE with 3D graphics. MACPAN is a Pacman clone. Galaxy & Sprengmeister are strategy games *M*
515 SHIPWRECK, educational maths with graphics.
514 A DUDLEY DILEMMA, ADV. game. You guide a student at Harvard University.
782 NAVAL BATTLE, Battleships
707 CENTAURI, a Horizontal scrolling shoot 'em up.
783 CHESS, MONOPOLY, BACKGAMMON
412 GRAND PRIX, good fast racing game
417 HEDGEHOG, Frogger clone.
411 KEY TO ATLANTIS, Go around collecting various treasures to prolong your life.

ST P.D NEW ADDITIONS

785 MOVIE CONSTRUCTOR: animate objects & text to create stunning effects. Examples inc. FACE ANIMATOR: design a face then let your ST animate it. *M*
786 SIMPLE DRAW V3.4: A great art package that works in medium & high Res. Degas compatible samples included. (Docs foreign)
787 HYPERTEXT: Shareware prog suitable for the production of very professional documents. Simular to a DTP but more flexible, pics & text easily mixed on

SOFTWARE FOR LESS THAN 80p

SMEG & AMEG PACKS ARE ONLY £7.99 FOR 10 DISKS!!!

SMEG & AMEG pack disks are available separately at the individual prices detailed below (just quote the disk numbers as normal

Characters between asterix's show special requirements:
"M" = Mono Res **"C" = Colour Res**
"D" = Double Sided Disk **"X" = 1 Meg Ram**

ST PD (continued)

screen *MD*
443 ATARI TOS 1.4 FIXERS(STFMs with Rainbow TOS): POOLFIX.PRG & TOS14FIX.PRG for fixing O/s bugs. CACHE.TTP for speeding up disk access. Full docs.
444 XCONTROL: ATARI's latest TT control panel accessory for all STs. CPXs included; Color Setup, Configure CPX's, General Setup, Modem Setup, Printer Setup, Sound Setup(STE only), Window Colours(TT only) and Accelerator. Plenty of docs on disk.
448 CYPHER: Encodes pics so that they cannot be loaded into normal art packages(& copied or modified) LITTLE GREEN SELECTOR: great file sel. replacement with many features lacking in the Atari version. Full docs. WPTOOLS: A .ACC that gives extra facilities to 1ST Word and 1ST Word Plus.
450 REVENGE V2.01: Super intelligent document displayer, which makes file reading a dream. Full docs.
454 MEMFILE 2.0: Memory and disk editor with powerful features, runs as a .ACC and you can actually examine the program you are running in memory. DLII: Check disks, retrieve deleted files & edit data directly on a floppy or hard disk. REORG: Companion prog for DLII. Examine data on a disc related to one file and rewrite it for better disc management, docs.
455 NAMENET:An excellent database that runs in Med & High res. Large amount of docs, and includes an 01 to 071/081 telephone number converter.
458 TETRIS:Classic 2D tumbling blocks game that's highly addic tive(MONO). PUZZLEMANIA: Multi level mayhem, highly addictive puzzle game wher you have to plan your way around the maze, turn on the generator and trap the droids.(COL)

GENERAL
465 POOLWISE V3.5, Sophisticated pools predictor. MED RES.
437 BUSINESS LETTERS, 100 business style letters. SPREADSHEET, visicalc clone.
807 SKY MAP, will display over 1500 of the brightest stars.*M*
575 CONSTELLATIONS. an Astronomers disk *M*.
701 PLANETARIUM, look at planet & get statistics on them.
802 THE PLANETS, A slide show around the planets with plenty of pics, facts & figures.*D*
832 ST TOUR, Guided tour of your ST in tutorial form.
833 YOUR SECOND ATARI MANUAL - A text file of the book. A must for all ST users.

EDUCATIONAL
872 KIDGRAPH, KIDMUSIC, KIDPIANO KIDPOTATO for children from 2-5 years *C*
559 KIDPUBLISHER, Kidsong. Numeric go round, Braille.
424 DOT2DOT, join the dots to make pics. KIDCOLOUR, for young children. KIDSHAPE.
426 THE BODY SHOP, a great prog ideal for any age group, locate bones and organs.
427 SOLAR SYSTEM GEOGRAPHY, loads of data on the solar system.
564 CHUNNEL, A French to English & vice-versa tutorial game, * C *
744 PERFECT MATCH, Try and match cards 2 at a time. Questions & answers.
539 TYPING TUTOR (2) A very good full documentation.
557 SPELLING MADE EASY, The computer speaks the word, you then type in the correct spelling. Words included.
558 MATHS MADE EASY, Another great prog with speech synthesis.
430 ME FIRST, a prog where the pics have to be put in the correct order.
431 COLOURING BOOK, Superb prog for young users. Draw pics & then colour them in.

AMIGA PD

AMEG PACK 1
BATTLE PONG (G100)
ZEUS puzzle game (G101)
MONOPOLY (G103)
AMIGOIDS asteroids (G104)
SPACE BLITZ (G105)
BLIZZARD, shoot'em up (G106)
DRAGONS CAVE (G107)
CASTLE OF DOOM (G108)
PSEUDO COP (G109)
DRIP, painter game. (G111)

AMEG PACK 2
MARBLE SLIDE, Pipemania (G113)
MAYHEM, Spaceships in caverns. (G114)
MEGABALL, breakout game. (G119)
PATIENCE card games. (G122)
TREASURE SEARCH (G125)
LEGEND OF FARGHAIL (G126)
ARCADIA, breakout game (G127)
DYNAMITE DICK (G128)
PAIR IT (G129)
SNAKES & LADDERS, REVERSI (G130)

AMEG PACK 5
Vision Megademo (D112)
Fast Cars Slideshow (D113
Mobed (D114)
Kefrens Wall Demo (D115)
Beast 2 Preview (D116)
Treacle (D117)
Share & Enjoy 47 (D118)
Congaman Animation (D121)
Anarchy Scratch Pack 39 (D122)
Juggette Anim (D125)

AMEG PACK 3
AMIGA TOOLS(1) (U100)
AMIGA TOOLS(2) (U101)
AMIBASE, very good DTB. (U102)
LABEL PRINTER, custom labels.(U103)
UEDIT, Wordprocessor. (U104)
COMMSPILATION 1, various modem utils.(U105)
VIRUS CATALOGUE, what, how ETC (107)
SID V1.06, The ultimate disk util.(U112)
Fonts & Surfaces(U113)
DISKSALVE 1.3(U114)

AMEG PACK 4
Silents Scroller (D100)
Utopia Cartoon Slides (D101)
Bunsen Burner (D102)
The Link Magademo (D103)
Ghost Pool (D104)
Scoopex Seven Sins (D105)
Disney Slideshow (D106)
Sleeping Bag Demo (D107)
System 5 Demo (D108)
Alpha Flight Megademo (D109)

GAMES
G102 - DIPLOMACY *X*
G110 - PD GAMES COMPILATION 1, inc. Welltrix & Breakout.
G112 - THE TURN & TRICKY A couple of good puzzle games.
G115 - JEOPARDY, based on the board game RISK *X*
G116 - LLAMATRON, Blasting game by jeff Minter.
G117 - PD GAMES COMPILATION 2, inc. Battlemech & Bullrun.
G118 - BATTLEFORCE, strategy game. *X*
G120 - CUBULUS, Rubiks cube type puzzle.
G121 - WIZZYS QUEST great game .*X*
G123 - STAR TREK, Final Frontier **2 Disks**
G124 - BOING THE GAME **2 Disks**
G131 - BREAKOUT CONSTRUCTION Set
G132 - QUIZ MASTER 2
G133 - POPEYE
G134 - TENNIS *X*
G135 - FLASCHIBER
G136 - RETURN TO EARTH
G137 - KLONDIKE
G138 - TREK TRIVIA
G139 - PIPELINE
G140 - STAR TREK THE NEXT GENERATION
G141 - UGA GAMES
G142 - HACK
G143 - BIP
G144 - STONEAGE
G145 - FRANTIC FREDDY
G146 - EATMINE Boulderdash * not A1500 etc.
G147 - BLOCK IT 1.2 puzzle game
G148 - BLACKJACK LAB inc tutor.

EDUCATION
E100 - LEARN & PLAY * 2 disks *
E101 - Talking Colouring Book.

UTILITIES
U106 - COMMSPILATION 2, more modem utils.
U108 - U110 CLIP ART, Various
U111 - Wordprocessing & Databasing
U115 - MENU-MAKER
U116 - ICON-MANIA
U117 - FIXDISK disk repairer
U118 - VACCINE BOOSTER, virus killer
U119 - QUICKBASE database
U120 - MED Moudules
U121 - RED SECTOR demo maker
U122 - MASTER VIRUS KILLER V2.1
U123 - TETRACOPY
U124 - JAZZBENCH
U125 - VISICALC Spreadsheet
U126 - THE MAGICIANS Utilities
U127 - STEEL MOON Utilities
U128 - SUPER C Disk
U129 - RED DEVIL Utilities 4
U130 - TEXT PLUS Wordprocessor
U131 - WORDWRIGHT Wordprocessor
U132 - AMIGA FOX basic DTP
U133A-D - C-MANUAL
U134 - PRINTER DRIVER GENERATOR KIT inc 50 drivers
U135 - IMPLODER V.4 cruncher/archiver
U136 - PCQ PASCAL SHELL easy to use, inc docs.

AMOS PD
A100 - Forms Unlimited
A101 - Archivist Datavbase
A102 - Word Square Solver
A103 - Fonts Disk 1
A104 - Fonts Disk 2
A105 - Baloonacy
A106 - Family History Database

FRED FISH
F52 - A-Z Text Editor
F143 - RIM DATABASE
F144 - ANALYTIC SPREADSHEET
F193 - KEYMAP EDITOR
F203 - ASSEMBLER & C
F219 - ASTRONOMY program
F349 - MED V3.00

DEMOS
D110 - Share & Enjoy 46
D111 - Thames TV Demo
D119 - Simpsons Mini Mega
D120 - Glass World Animation
D123 - Bugs Bunny Anim *X*
D124 - Smurf + Cokeman Anims *X*

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P100 - A68K Assembler
P101 - North C

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AMEG PACK 8 - Fred Fish disks 11-20
AMEG PACK 9 - Fred Fish disks 21-30
AMEG PACK 10 - Fred Fish disk 31-40
AMEG PACK 11 - Fred Fish disks 41-50
AMEG PACK 12 - Fred Fish disks 51-60
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Public Speaking

There must be something about the public domain that really makes your blood boil. Do you reckon the software's a load of old cobblers, or are you fed up of those whinging old gets who have nothing better to do than to write into letters pages complaining? Perhaps you've found some PD program that's so good you want to tell everyone about it?

This is the place to ask those questions, air your views, or send bribes of Caribbean holidays. Write to me, the Ed, at:

Public Speaking, *Public Domain*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW

Sorry, but I can't reply to your letters personally, so *don't* enclose stamped self-addressed envelopes – every letter is read and I'll try and print as many of them as possible in each issue.

DJ Barnett
Stoke-on-Trent

Double trouble

I have recently bought a second–hand Atari ST. It has a single-sided disk drive. This means that I am unable to load the programs directly off your cover disk.

Could you please let me know if I have to change the built-in disk drive or whether, if I bought a second disk drive, it would work with double-sided disks like yours?

If I wanted to make a copy of a disk, will a double-sided disk transfer to a single-sided disk and vice versa?

Will I still be able to use a single-sided disk if I upgrade to a double-sided disk drive?

Thanks for your help and assistance.

ED: Our cover disk will not work on single-sided machines. Though early STs were supplied with a single-sided drive, these have been superseded by double-sided drives which hove the advantage of being able to store twice the amount of data on the same type of disk.

I would recommend to any ST owner that still has an old-fashioned drive to upgrade. It'll give you access to a wide range of games, other commercial programs and of course the *Public Domain* cover disk. Internally-fitting upgrades start from around £50.

Another option is to buy on external drive. The advantage is that you then hove a two-drive system. The disadvantage is that many commercial products, games especially, will only run from the computer's first drive. You would still be unable to use these. You'll be able to copy the contents of a single-sided disk onto o double-sided disk easily, but the reverse is not true because there simply isn't the memory available on o single-sided drive for oll the doto. It will still be possible to copy individual programs across, though.

Robert Giles
Crowle, Worcs

The right to copy

Please could you explain the rules and regulations on copyright laws and how to find out whether a disk is copyrighted. I am not aware of the copyright laws so if you could give me some information I would be grateful.

ED: Everything o person creotes is automatically their copyright. So if you write a program on your computer or draw some graphics or create some music, then that work is your copyright and nobody else hos the right to copy it without your permission.

Authors of public domain software hove decided to give up this right, and hove donated their work for everybody who would like to use it. True public domain disks ore copyright-free and you con do what you like with the code on the disk.

Some writers hove donated their work to anybody who wonts to use it, but haven't given away the copyright. They hove merely given permission for anybody who would like to use the program to do so. Usually this is so they con attach certain provisions to the use of the software, such os stipulating that it must not be altered or used as port of another program. This type of PD is often called freewore.

Other types of software, such os shareware, con be copied but must be paid for if you intend to use the program regularly. An address to send a registration fee will be included on the program disk.

Commercial software or licencewore cannot be copied – put bluntly, you ore breaking the low if you do.

Any disk you obtain from a public domain library or bulletin board should hove, somewhere in its documentation, a notice declaring what kind of software it is and any conditions you should follow to use the program. I hope that's cleared things up.

Stuart Hardy
Sheffield

Public scenario

I have recently created some scratch-built scenarios for both Rainbird's *Universal Military Simulator* and US Gold's *Leaderboard*. I would like to distribute these within the public domain circuit.

Will I need to create some sort of 'readme' file for these scenarios giving details of the game's copyright laws? They are used in conjunction with commercially available software products, after all!

ED: I don't think it would do any harm to include a copyright notice in the 'readme' file. After oll, you'll hove to put something there to explain the nature of the games ond what's required to use them. I'm sure the original programmers would be delighted to see that someone hos gone to the trouble to produce something for their game!

K Grainger
Dalston, London

Clean your act up

I have been buying PD disks since I bought an Amiga a few months ago and have been both delighted and disappointed by what has come though the post and also, at times, very irritated.

I was therefore interested to read about the establishment of United Public Domain Suppliers and about the idea that they may act as a 'governing body' for suppliers. I noticed that they're concerned about pornographic software. My particular dislikes so far are:

1. Programmers who don't provide any exit from their programs, except by re-booting the disk. This is really annoying on compilation disks, especially when it involves re-booting workbench.

2. Programmers who assume that everyone ought to know how to play their game or use their utility and don't provide adequate instructions. I have several games that are never used because of this.

3. Programmers who think it's smart to include obscene language in their demos. I even came across one which had obscenities in the start-up sequence. These juveniles should take their disks away and come back when they have grown up.

4. Programmers who are content to issue shoddy material and include comments like: "I know the menu's crap, but what do you expect, it's PD!" Obviously programs will vary in quality and I think it's a good that everyone can have their work seen by a large audience. Anyone who puts work into the public domain should have some pride in what they've done, and not inflict this sloppy stuff on the rest of the World.

Maybe the PD libraries would like to consider something along these lines?

Finally, can I say that of the seven or eight PD libraries that I have bought from, their service has been amazingly fast and helpful. If only other commercial organisations were as good!

ED: The quality of software available in the public domain varies considerably. There are some real gems out there, but there's some real dross too! That's part of the ideology behind *Public Domain*: to review programs so you know what's worth getting.

There's nothing more annoying than getting hold of a program only to discover that you're unable to get it to work properly or that the instructions are inadequate. Programmers take note!

Mark Saunders
Godshill, Isle of Wight

Three way split

I'm really pleased that at long last we've got a PD-specific magazine. I'm also pleased that it's so well written and set out. (Mind you, I expect no less from the publishers of *Amiga Format*!)

One aspect I dislike is that the mag attempts to serve Amiga, ST and PC users. This is a slightly backwards step as most of the non-specific magazines have long-since divided into individual formats. I hope that *Public Domain* is just a prelude to *Amiga Public Domain*, *ST Public Domain* and *PC Public Domain*. That said, there is little to fault it. Your news is useful as are your articles but of course the reviews are the thing that really makes it essential reading. Why? PD may be 'free' (arguable), but whether a program costs 50p or £50 doesn't make much difference when it turns out to be rubbish! Hopefully your reviews, with screenshots and ratings, will help us to sort out the superb from the pathetic (many PD suppliers are reluctant to do this).There is, after all, a lot of rubbish about.

The very nature of PD means that almost everything ends up on PD somewhere, whether it's Tobias Richter's latest, or Fred Bloggs' first attempt.

To this end, I'd welcome more detail in the actual reviews – much as would be given to professional software. For instance, games would benefit from scores on their graphics, sound, difficulty and playability to accompany the description and overall score. This would make it easier to assess games from a consumer's point of view.

ED: While it's true that mainstream titles have seen a tendency to go single-format, I don't think we could have launched *Public Domain* to cover just one machine as the public domain market isn't strong enough on any single format. It's only by covering all three machines that we can be confident of achieving a readership high enough to ensure a good enough circulation.

However, we are keeping a very close eye on the developments in the PD world and if it grows to the degree that we're sure it will, then who knows...?

It's an important part of our policy to review PD programs in the same way that we'd review any full-priced product. That's why we used professional reviewers who've all had experience in reviewing programs in other areas of computing. A PD supplier, no matter how well-meaning or unbiased they strive to be, isn't going to slag off the very programs that they're supplying!

We have no plans to modify the rating system we use, though. A single percentage mark to sum up all the reviewers' overall opinion reflects the program much better than splitting it into component ratings. Graphics may not be particularly important to a particular type of program. For instance, an adventure is unlikely to have any sound at all, but that does not mean it's going to be a bad game.

In fact, I think that you'll find that many of the mainstream 16-bit magazines have discarded these complicated ratings systems as dead wood – *Amiga Power*, *Amiga Format*, *ST Format* and *PC Format* have all gone the single overall mark-route. This gives more space for more important elements: more copy, screenshots and captions.

I disagree that it's quite as bad buying a bad PD game as buying a bad full-priced product, though. It's always annoying to find that something you've just bought is not quite what you had in mind, but I, for one, would be a lot less happy wasting £25 on a naff product than just a quid.

Peter Hunter
London

American pie

I have been a devotee of 'free' software for some time and am familiar with the various conventions involved. I am also among the minority of honest (or conscience-striken) users who enter into the true spirit of the shareware concept by registering and would recommend that all *Public Domain* readers do likewise, not only because of the honesty of doing so but for the benefits registration confers. Among these are a properly printed and bound manual, the right to low-cost upgrades and sometimes a say in the future of the development of shareware programs.

For the individual user in this country, however, there is sometimes a disincentive to registering. Many of the really useful shareware applications come from across the pond and with typical American arrogance the authors assume that the good old US of A is the only country in the World! They expect payment to be sent to their American addresses in US dollars. This means getting an International Money Order, sending off by airmail and waiting several weeks to send their registration details. It also carries the risk of the magnetic media being corrupted by X-ray equipment.

Furthermore I am sick of word processors coming up with the '#' symbol when I have to hit Shift '3' for the '£' sign! Also, when using American spell-checkers, I am not keen on fitting my car with 'tires' or using the vehicle in question for 'traveling' when the correct UK spellings are 'tyres' and 'travelling' respectively.

One notable exception is Brown Bag Software which offers registration facilities in Sterling which is good news since its *Power Menu* is easily the friendliest and most feature-laden DOS front end I've ever encountered.

Are there any UK registration agents who will accept the registration fee paid in Sterling and provide the usual latest version configured for the UK character set?

ED: Glad to see that there are people out there prepared to pay for the shareware they use. Remember that 'buying' a shareware program only entitles you to the right to evalute the program. If you wish to use it outside a trial period (usually specified in the program's document files) you must send off the required fee. As well as making you feel good about yourself, it often entitles you to extras. So go on, do the decent thing.

OK, it's annoying having to write overseas to register a shareware product, but to be fair, arranging distribution in a foreign country is not easy. Brown Bag are a large corporation and therefore have the clout necessary to start UK distribution. Most shareware producers are much smaller. Imagine the tables turned. If you were to produce a shareware product, would you be able to tie up the US distribution rights?

Is it really that much trouble to get a International Money Order? It may be extra hassle to you but I'm sure that the software's author would appreciate it.

On the other hand, maybe a shareware agent authorised to distribute UK registration copies is a good idea. Maybe such an organisation could handle the output from several such shareware producers? PD

Gripe, praise, problem or query? Write to the right place

There are now two letters sections in *Public Domain*. This page is for debate, complaint and (ahem) praise... Basically any opinions you'd like to express about public domain or shareware software should be sent to the address at the top of the page.

If you have any questions about the legal side of PD, or you want to know where you stand in a given scenario, then this, too, is the place to write. However, if your question should have any hint of (gulp) anything technical being asked, then go away! I don't want to know!

Luckily, we have a specially-desinged computer to take care of that side of things. It's called PDQ and has a brain the size of planet – actually, it's our Tech Ed Tim wearing a cardboard box over his head and making silly 'beep beep' noises. Oh well, as long as it keeps him happy.

And nothing keeps him happier! He's just so eager to please. But there is the occasional problem that stumps even him, in which case requests are made for additional help. And if you do know the answer, you will help, won't you?

There's no need to feel shy, either! We won't think you're a complete dweeb, no matter how silly your question sounds. So whatever your dilemma, never fear, we'll do our best to help!

So address your techie questions to the PDQ computer at:
PDQ, *Public Domain*, Future Publishing,
30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW

Programming & Utilities

Fancy some more printer fonts? Want to be able to accomplish PC file operations easily? Or do you have a desire to give your Amiga a complete physical? Then this is the place to find them as Tim Howell runs through what's available for the more serious computer user...

REVIEWS INDEX

AMP Hard Disk Directory (PC)	27
Art Sprite Designer (Amiga)	20
Cartoon Brushes (Amiga)	27
Cat Disk (PC)	24
Cheetah (ST)	22
Diskmaster 3.2 (Amiga)	24
DiskMech (ST)	26
Disktree (PC)	19
Double Click Utilities (ST)	26
Executive Director (PC)	19
FontEd (PC)	25
Imploder 4.0 (Amiga)	25
Infoplus (PC)	19
Interrupt List (PC)	20
Kaosdesk (ST)	20
LC24-200 Fonts (Amiga)	25
MessySID (Amiga)	18
Narc (PC)	27
PC Studio (PC)	27
PrintStudio (Amiga)	24
STE Boot (ST)	28
Superboot (ST)	18
System Exerciser (Amiga)	20
Tetracopy (Amiga)	28
Windows Bench (Amiga)	22

MessySID (PD)

Amiga • U303
Strictly PD, 11 York Place, Bristol BS1 5UT

There's only one word that can be used to describe this program: brilliant. Actually *MessySID* is more than one program – it's a combination of Timm Martin's popular file utility *SID*, together with *MessyDOS*, which enables you to read from and write to MS-DOS formatted disks (they're the ones used by PCs).

The combination of these two programs is a god-send for those who need an easy way of transferring files between Amiga and PC disk formats. *SID* has been praised in these hallowed pages before, and has been given a rating of 92 per cent, no less. It is a straightforward program to use, able to accomplish most file operations, such as copying and deleting files, with the click of a button.

MessyDOS is a handy tool that enables you to access disks formatted in the PC's MS-DOS disk operating system and has been around in the public domain for quite a while. However, the way it has been packaged previously made it inaccessible to all but the most technically-competent users as a number of files and conditions had to be set-up before you could get it to perform even the most basic functions.

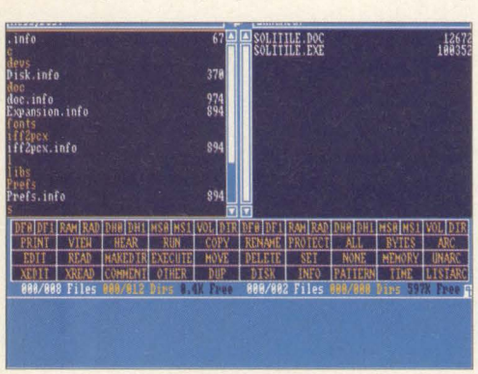
However, when these two unrelated programs are partnered in such a way, both of them benefit. All of *SID*'s functions have been kept, while MS-DOS functions have been added. This doesn't mean that you can load or run PC software on the Amiga, in case you were wondering, but it does mean you can transfer files between the two machines.

MessySID is a useful program for people who have to transfer files between the two formats. *MessySID* regards the Amiga disk drives as the standard DF0: and DF1: but when PC disks are in a disk drive they are treated as devices MS0: and MS1: instead. Changing between devices and disks is as easy as clicking on an icon.

Of course, *MessySID*'s ability to delete and copy files quickly and without fuss makes it essential for those fortunate enough to have both an Amiga and a PC, or use the two different file formats a lot. Better still, it's all done with icons so there's no messing about with convoluted DOS commands.

The whole package is stable – it doesn't crash – and works well – we use it all the time in the *Public Domain* office for transferring our Amiga screen grabs. If you're looking at getting a file utility, and have even considered getting *SID* (which is an essential tool to have in your collection, in any case), then think about getting *MessySID* instead – it's got even more features and is just as easy to use.

AMIGA 93%



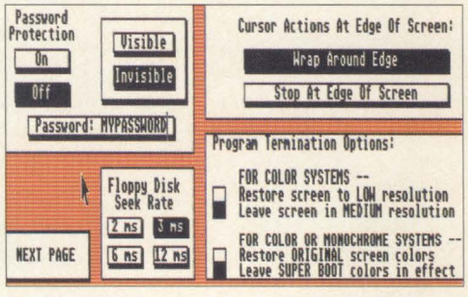
Amiga files on one side, PC files on the other. With *MessySID* copying files from one side to the other – and a lot more besides – is as easy as clicking on an icon

Superboot 7.0 (Shareware)

ST • Riverdene PDL
30a School Road, Tilehurst, Reading, Berkshire RG3 5AN.
☎ 0734 452416

A lot of disks, when they are put in the disk drive, automatically display a coloured screen, run a program, or set up the desktop in a customised way, such as by setting the screen mode to medium resolution.

Previously, if you wanted to write a program that achieved this you had to know at least a little bit about the ST's AUTO folders and DESKTOP.INF files. Now, though, you can use *Superboot* to do all this and more. The program enables you to arrange what happens when you boot up your machine using your boot disk.



By using straightforward menu screens, *Superboot* enables you to customise the way your disks boot up. With a bit of effort, you could display a picture or play a digitised sound

With *Superboot* you can set such things as:

- Run a particular program when you boot up the disk
- Display a welcome screen – which can be a graphics file in any one of several formats such as those produced by *Neochrome* and

Degas art packages
- Play a digitised sound
- Set the correct date and time on the computer's internal clock
- Enter a password to access a disk
- Set the floppy disk seek rate to determine how fast the disk drive accesses files.

All of these functions can be selected through straightforward menus, which can then access individual sub-menus to detail what specific things should occur. Sometimes the settings you select mysteriously don't happen, but, when it does work, which is most of the time, it is a useful utility.

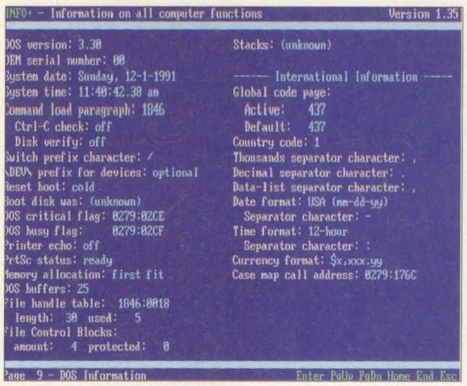
ST 71%

Infoplus (Shareware)

PC • Disk 16159 • Eigen PD
PO Box 722, Swindon, Wilts SN2 6YB
☎ 0793 611270

What'cha got in the box? That's a commonly-asked question by PC owners oblivious to what they've got inside their computer's casing. Well, put away those screwdrivers, *Infoplus* is a handy program that will tell you virtually everything about your machine's hardware in great detail, short of giving it a Zodiac sign.

All of this information is displayed in the form of 17 pages of text, covering such diverse areas as CPU and ROM identification and how much RAM your machine has got, right down to bare-level subjects such as information on the machine's ports, BIOS and partition listings. Yes, it can get a bit techie, but the information *Infoplus* provides is of use to all users.



No need for a screwdriver – learn all about the innards of your PC at the touch of a few keys – *Infoplus* displays a wide range of information about the way your PC is set-up

Changing between the pages is as easy as pressing the PgUp and PgDn keys, or by inputting the specific page that you wish to see. Each page is laid out in an organised manner, and the pages are arranged logically, with the more basic information positioned at the beginning, and gradually getting more 'techie' the further you go.

Infoplus is a handy program for

cont. on p20

Disgusted with the dreaded DOS?

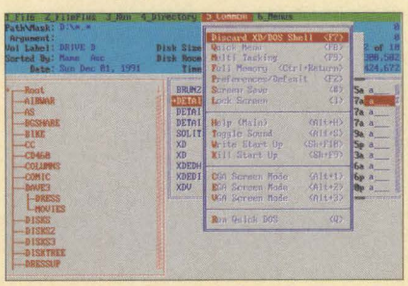
Of the wide range of PD and shareware software available for the PC, a large proportion seems to be made up of programs that make MS-DOS more accessible to the average computer user.

Here's a look at a couple of tools that succeed in making MS-DOS commands easily accessible, while providing a lot of other useful functions as well.

Executive Director (Shareware)

PC • PSA • Tarnwood, 10 High Street, Tadlow, Near Royston, Herts SG8 0ES
☎ 0767 23302

Compared to *Disktree*, *Executive Director* is a more advanced program that basically does the same thing as *Disktree*, but costs more to register (£55 as opposed to £36) and comes on two disks. Not that this should put you off, as *Executive Director* does everything it sets out to do, and does it well.



Yet another package aimed at making the PC's operating system friendlier, *Executive Director* includes a wide range of functions in the one program, all of which can be accessed at the press of a key

The package is a combined Menu Shell and File Management System. These two main functions can be switched between by pressing F10 – each function has its own pull-down menus which can only be accessed when in the mode that uses them.

The Menu Shell enables you to set up menus and sub-menus to access and run different programs on a disk, usually a hard disk. These enable simple, speedy access to these programs.

The File Management menus, on the other hand, let you do all the common DOS file operations such as copying and deleting files.

It's recommended that you run *Executive Director* from your computer's AUTOEXEC.BAT file. That way, whenever you boot up, you've got all the files on your hard disk effectively at the touch of a key.

Other useful functions of *Executive Director* include an in-built ability to archive and de-archive files using the powerful *PKZip* archiving tool. There's also a 'Where Is' function that enables you to track down any files with a certain name or DOS extension – especially useful if your hard disk is as organised as my desk! There are also options to turn on a screen saver to prevent phosphor burn-in (which can damage the screen), and all the PC's different screen modes, that is to say CGA, EGA and VGA are supported.

All in all, *Executive Director* can do more than *Disktree*, but whether the additional functions are worth the extra shareware fee is debatable, especially when taking into consideration the fact the *Disktree*'s functions are more accessible – direct key-presses instead of going through menus.

PC 70%

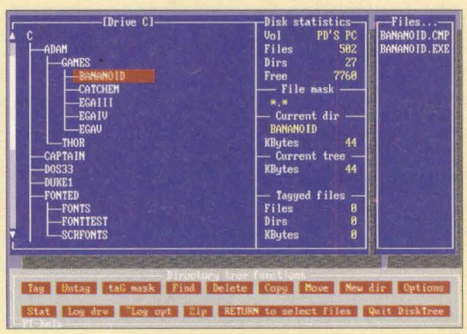
Disktree (Shareware)

PC • PSA, Tarnwood, 10 High Street, Tadlow, Nr Royston, Herts SG8 0ES
☎ 0767 23302

The point's been made often enough: MS-DOS isn't very friendly. To try and make this venerable operating system at least a bit friendlier, a number of utilities have been created and *Disktree* is one of these.

What the program does is provide a more accessible front-end to MS-DOS programs. You can use it to copy and delete files, run other programs and generally make most of the common MS-DOS commands as accessible as pressing a single or combination of keys; not half as cumbersome as learning to understand the DOS commands from the command line (though a certain degree of knowledge is required just so you know what the commands actually mean).

Disktree displays the information about the files graphically in a form that resembles a genealogical tree. So, for example, it will show the name of a directory, then display all the files and subdirectories within it as a series of branches coming from it. All of the commonly-used commands are shown in the bottom third of the screen along with the keys that access them, which helps to make the program even easier to use.



By displaying the information on a disk in such a tree-like pattern, *Disk Tree* makes it easy to hunt down those files that always seem to get lost among the PC's directories, and sub-directories, and sub-sub-directories....

More detailed information on the disk drives and the files, such as how much space the disk drive has free, for example, can also be displayed at the press of a mouse button.

Basic DOS functions such as copying, moving and deleting files, directories and entire directory trees can also be done with *Disktree*. It can also help you hunt down files by their filename – handy if you've got a lot of files on the disk.

Disktree can also work on networks as it treats local and network drives the same. There are also built-in help screens to make the program more immediately accessible, but if you are still a mite confused you can consult the fairly comprehensive document file that is provided on the disk.

Disktree achieves its objective of making basic and more advanced disk functions easily accessible, and is useful if you've got a hard drive, particularly one clogged up by files.

PC 82%

cont. from p19

those merely curious as to how their computer is set-up, to those who need to know the information for programming purposes, for example.

PC 77%

System Exerciser (PD)

Amiga • U035 • SPD
62 Manor Road, Hastings, East Sussex, TN34 3LJ
☎ 0424 712349

We all know the Amiga is a powerful machine, but just how powerful is it? How well does it manage its processor power and use its disk drives? Well, by using this disk you can discover all these things plus a couple more to boot.

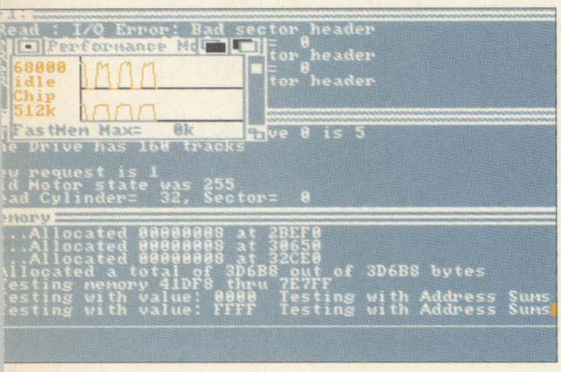
The software on this disk puts your machine through a rigorous testing procedure in order to determine its capabilities. The computer's disk drives and memory are tested, in quite a lengthy and drawn-out process.

When the disk drives are tested, a blank disk needs to be put in the drive to be written to and read from. *System Exerciser* monitors the drive's performance on a track-by-track basis, measuring how fast the data can be transferred. In order to do this, however, the drive is in constant use for over half an hour. Whether this does the drive any damage I don't know – the best bet would be to not use this program too often.

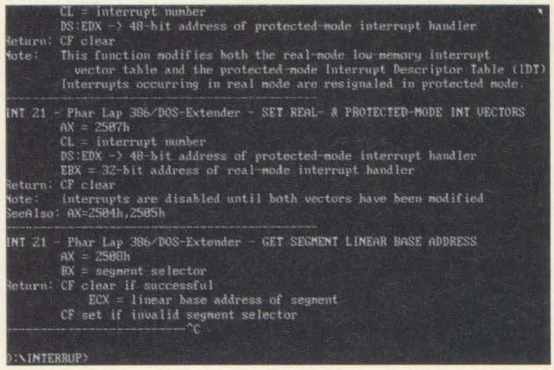
There are a couple of other programs on the disk. One, called *Performance Monitor*, produces a graph detailing how the processing power of the machine and its devices are being used while all these tasks are going on.

In short, *System Exerciser* is a program you could use a couple of times a month, just to see if your Amiga is working properly, but there is no real point in using the program more often than this. Besides, the way it uses the disk drive could, perhaps, be doing more harm than good if used too much.

AMIGA 63%



By putting the Amiga's various peripherals through a rigorous testing procedure, *System Exerciser* tells you just how well your Amiga can use its devices


CL = interrupt number
DS:EDX -> 48-bit address of protected-mode interrupt handler
Return: CF clear
Note: This function modifies both the real-mode low-memory interrupt vector table and the protected-mode Interrupt Descriptor Table (IDT)
Interrupts occurring in real mode are resignaled in protected mode.
INT 21 - Phar Lap 386/DOS-Extender - SET REAL- & PROTECTED-MODE INT VECTORS
AX = 2587h
CL = interrupt number
DS:EDX -> 48-bit address of protected-mode interrupt handler
EBX = 32-bit address of real-mode interrupt handler
Return: CF clear
Note: interrupts are disabled until both vectors have been modified
SeeAlso: AX=2584h,2585h
INT 21 - Phar Lap 386/DOS-Extender - GET SEGMENT LINEAR BASE ADDRESS
AX = 2588h
BX = segment selector
Return: CF clear if successful
ECX = linear base address of segment
CF set if invalid segment selector
^C
D:\INTERRUP>

Undoubtedly boring to look at, you can't get away from the fact that *Interrupt Lists* contains a lot of useful information if you're a PC programmer (or if you're an incurable insomniac!)

Interrupt List (Shareware)

PC • Disk 16155 • Eigen PD
PO Box 722, Swindon, Wilts SN2 6YB
☎ 0793 611270

Sorry to interrupt, but I just had to tell you about this disk that is packed with information about, erm, interrupts.

Compiled with the help of a large number of people, *Interrupt List* is just what the name implies: a list of interrupts. A list, in fact, that amounts to several hundred kilobytes.

For those who don't know, interrupts are the instructions that tell a computer to stop what it's doing and do something else. Interrupts need only make the computer pause for 1/20th of a second, then return it to the main part of the program. This is explained quite well in the program instructions: "Without interrupts, the CPU would have to constantly check for external events; with interrupts, the CPU can work on something else and still respond to an event as soon as it occurs."

As such, *Interrupt List* is only of real use to programmers, as its technical nature not only requires a good understanding of the hardware of the PC and how to program it, but also a lot of diligence to be able to wade through it all. The information seems to be all there and explained in great detail, although the specific nature of all this information limits the disk's appeal. A lot of work has gone into this disk, so if you're interested in obtaining the information, it's worth a look.

PC 66%

Spritely designs with an art package

Art Sprite Designer (Licenceware)

Amiga • 1102
Amiganuts United, 169 Dale Valley Road, Hollybrook, Southampton SO1 6QX

Budding games and demo creators on the Amiga have a wide range of graphics utilities available to them, but while there are a lot of graphics converters and picture savers around, there are very few programs that enable you to design your own sprites.

Art Sprite Designer is a complex sprite creation utility. It has a wide range of editing and design commands, and the sprites you save can be used in your own programs (this does require a bit of expertise on the part of the user, though). Two versions of the program are supplied for different memory configurations – one for owners of Amigas with 512K, the other for those lucky enough to have 1Mb machines.

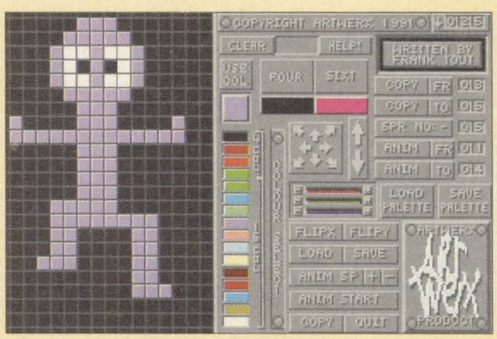
All of the program's functions are accessed via icons and there are no pull-down menus, which are normally found in Amiga programs. Basically, the program's functions are similar to those found in art packages, with editing and colouring options available on the main screen instead of being accessed via menus.

As well as being able to design sprites, you can also animate them with *Art Sprite Designer*. Sprites are edited individually and can then be arranged in order to create an illusion of motion. While a number of programmers use brushes for sprites, *Art Sprite Designer* allows you to design the Amiga's hardware sprites. These can range in size to up to 256 pixels high, but only 16 pixels across (which is the maximum size a sprite can be on the Amiga) and in four or 16 colours.

The sprites that you create can be saved, but to load them again requires you to know the name of the file – a bit of a hassle if you don't know the filename. And if you don't know the filename, then you can't return to the main program.

If you're a programmer or graphics artist looking for a program that specifically handles sprites and lets you design and edit them easily, the *Art Sprite Designer* could be the solution.

AMIGA 74%



One for all you programmers and graphic artists out there, *Art Sprite Designer* provides an easy way of designing sprites for your games, demos or just for the fun of it

Kaosdesk (Shareware)

ST • Disk 1736 • South West Software Library, PO Box 562, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 2Y

In spite of how easy the ST's desktop is to use, it has to be admitted that it's not as easy as it perhaps could be. To

cont. p2

MENU DRIVEN SHAREWARE

Most of our disks contain a friendly easy to use menu system to assist you in loading the program, installing the program, reading or printing the documentation etc. Below is a selection of our themed packs which represent exceptional value.

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PC Tutor (1) Zephyr (2)
Magic Menus (2) Virus Toolkit (1)
Membership Database 2

BUSINESS pack 1

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PC File Plus (2) Freecalc (1)
As Easy As (1) Magic Menus (2)

BUSINESS pack 2

Freeway Accounts Plus V4 (3)
Page Financial Contoller (3)
Freeway Cashbooks (3)
Noyes Incomplete Records (1)
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EDUCATION pack 1

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Educational Games 1 & 2 (2)
Word Games (1) Word Gallery (1)
PC Fastype (1), ABC Fun Keys (1)
Language Tutors (2)
Amy's First Primer (1)

EDUCATION pack 2

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Each pack contains 11 disks and is priced as follows:
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Code	Program	Disks
1001	Freeway Accounts Plus	3
1004	Freeway Payroll	3
1007	Freeway Cashbook	3
1010	Noyes Accounts	1
1011	Noyes Accounts Plus	1
1014	Noyes Cashbooks	1
1015	Noyes Cashbooks Plus	1
1017	Page Financial Controller	3

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Code	Program	Disks
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1504	Formaster	1
1506	Front Office	3
1509	Policy Maker	2
1511	Laser Letterhead	1
1512	PC Sell	1
1513	Sage Trader	1
1514	Purchase Order	1
1515	PDS Quotes	1
1516	EstiBid	5

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Code	Program	Disks
2001	Procomm Plus	1
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Code	Program	Disks
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2510	Membership Database	2
2512	Database Publisher	1
2513	Wampum	2
2515	Instant Recall	1
2516	FreeFile	1
2517	Simply Labels	1
2518	InfoBASE	1
2519	Softcat	1
2520	PC-File Plus V3.0	4

EDUCATION

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3005	Basic Tutor	1
3006	PC-Tutor	1
3007	Batch Tutor	1
3008	8086 Tutor	1
3009	C Tutor	2
3101	Lotus 123 Tutor	1
3102	WordPerfect Tutor	2
3104	dBase IV Tutor	1

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3207	Word Gallery	1
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3252	ABC Fun Keys	1
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3302	German Tutor	1
3303	Italian Tutor	1

GRAPHICS PROGRAMS

Code	Program	Disks
3501	Draft Choice V1.4i	1
3502	Present	1
3503	Express Graph	1
3504	City Desk V2.0	1
3505	Image 3D	1
3506	Graphics Workshop	2
3508	Flowdraw	2
3601	Gem Art Disk 1	1
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4101	CGA Games Disk 1	1
4102	CGA Games Disk 2	1
4103	CGA Games Disk 3	1
4104	CGA Games Disk 4	1
4105	CGA Games Disk 5	1
4111	Monopoly	1
4112	Ford Simulator	1
4113	Bushido	1
4121	Pinball Games Disk 1	1
4131	Basic Games Disk 1	1
EGA GAMES		
4201	EGA Games Disk 1	1
4202	EGA Games Disk 2	1
4211	Mah-Jongg	2
4213	Blackjack	1
VGA GAMES		
4301	VGA Games Disk 1	1
4302	VGA Games Disk 2	1
4311	Las Vegas Casino	1
4312	What is it?	1

LEISURE

Code	Program	Disks
4501	Home Budget Management System	1
4503	Talk/PC Musician	1
4504	Express Check V2.06	1
4505	Checkbook Charlie V2.01	1
4506	CheX V2.41	1

GENERAL

Code	Program	Disks
5001	PC Prompt	1
5002	PC Demo	1
5003	Early Bird V1.0	1
5004	Quick Personal Accounting System	1
5005	Football Forecast V3.0	1

SPREADSHEET

Code	Program	Disks
6001	As Easy As	1
6002	PC-Calc Plus	3
6005	Freecalc	1
6006	InstaCalc V2.0	1

UTILITIES

Code	Program	Disks
7001	PKZIP (PKZ110)	1
7002	Arc Master	1
7003	Narc	1
7101	The Virus Toolkit	1
7102	Format QM/Copy QM	1
7121	Disk Utilities Disk 1	1
7122	Disk Utilities Disk 2	1
7123	Disk Utilities Disk 3	1
7201	DOS Shells One	1
7202	DOS Shells Two	1
7203	Professional Master Key V3	2
7205	4DOS	1
7221	DOS Utilities Disk 1	1
7301	Screen Machine & Cellboss	1
7401	Hard Disk Tools	1
7402	Treeview	1
7501	Automenu	1
7502	Magic Menus	2
7601	Bradford V2.03	1
7602	LQ V2.34	2
7604	Image Print V1.5	1
7702	File Utilities	1
7703	Patriquins Utilities	1
7704	Buerg's Utilities	1

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Code	Program	Disks
8001	PC Write	1
8002	PC Write Lite	2
8004	PC Type II	3
8007	PC Type Plus	3
8010	Sage Words	1
8011	Multi-Lingual Word Processor	1
8012	New York Word	2
8014	Rubicon Publisher	3
8017	Galaxy	1
8018	PC Write V2.7	2
8020	Freeword	1
8401	PC Outline V3.35	1

cont. from p20

this end, there have been a number of replacement desktops available commercially which seek to improve the functionality and appearance of the machine. Now a number of similar replacements are appearing in the public domain.

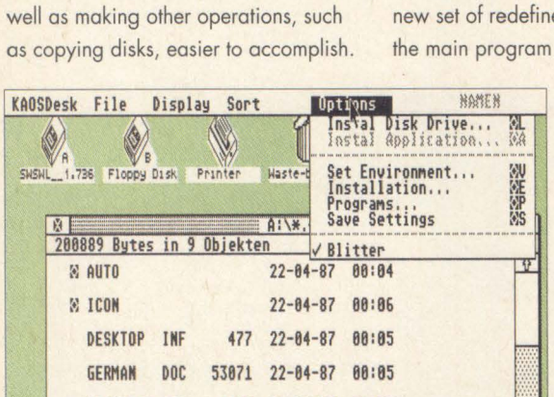
Kaosdesk is one of these, and while it doesn't get rid of the (to be polite) putrid green colour of the ST's desktop, it improves its appearance, making the icons better-defined, as well as making other operations, such as copying disks, easier to accomplish.

This desktop originated in Germany, a country which seems to have an abundance of ST developers. One consequence of this, though, is that the instructions for *Kaosdesk* are written in German, although the South West Software Library has made an effort to translate a lot of this.

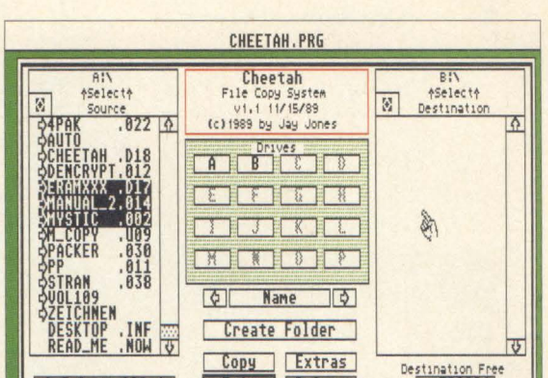
Despite the language difficulties, *Kaosdesk* is a usable program. Once it's run it immediately re-styles the appearance of the desktop, with a new set of redefined icons. As well as the main program on the disk there are a number of other supporting files that provide, among other things, icons that suit particular types of programs and applications. Not only are there pre-defined icons on the disk, there is an Icon Editor that lets you create your own designs.

Using *Kaosdesk* definitely makes the ST easier to use, at least once you've gotten used to the German commands. However, it does limit the amount of free memory that you have available to load and run other programs, so even though it will run on a 512K machine, the more memory you have the better.

If you're looking at giving your ST a facelift then take a look at this.



Who needs those expensive commercial desktop replacements when there is a program like *Kaosdesk* in the public domain? By re-defining icons and generally improving the way the ST works, *Kaosdesk* effectively gives your ST a complete facelift!



Instead of dragging files across between folders and disks, you can use *Cheetah* to copy those files easily and quickly. It's especially useful if you regularly copy information to a hard disk

ST 71%

Cheetah (Shareware)

ST • CH004/U • Captain Hack's Public Domain
10 Latimer Drive, Laindon, Essex SS15 4AD
☎ 0268 416888

One particularly handy feature of the ST is that copying files is as easy as dragging them from one icon, such as a disk, to another. While this is quite a straightforward way of doing things, there is some room for improvement, particularly when multiple files are involved. Then it can become a real pain in the disk drive. *Cheetah* is an attempt at making file copying quicker and easier, and in general it succeeds at doing this.

Rather than using icons, *Cheetah* is menu-driven. It displays a box in the centre of the screen with two columns for the source and destination devices to and from which the files are to be transferred. *Cheetah* is also capable of copying files to hard drives which is particularly useful as the program has been optimised to make this a more speedy operation than it is normally.

Besides the basic file operations, *Cheetah* also enables you to create new folders. Via its Extras menu other functions are available; it will tell you how much memory is available to use for a buffer to copy files to and from, as well as determining the amount of free space available on the disks you want to copy files to. Elaborate file sorting capabilities are also available, and files can be sorted according to a variety of conditions, such as by their name, file extension, size or the date they were created.

Simple in nature but nevertheless very useful, *Cheetah* is one of those programs that just makes life that extra bit easier (at least as far as copying files on the ST goes, anyway. How to open a milk carton without resorting to brute force is still one of life's great mysteries).

ST 72%

Pretty up your windows – without the washing up liquid

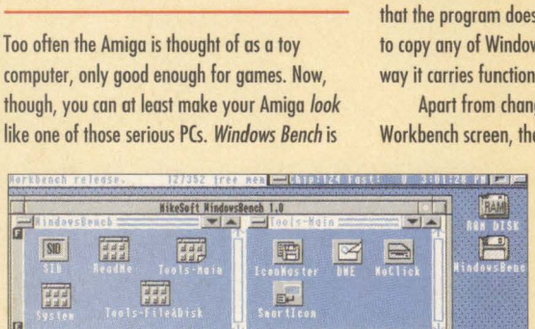
Windows Bench (PD)

Amiga • U638, U639
NBS, 1 Chain Lane, Newport, Isle of Wight PO30 5QA
☎ 0983 529594

Too often the Amiga is thought of as a toy computer, only good enough for games. Now, though, you can at least make your Amiga *look* like one of those serious PCs. *Windows Bench* is an attempt to make your Amiga's Workbench look like Microsoft's Windows operating system.

And it is fairly successful, with both the colours and the style of the graphics doing a fairly good impression the PC display. Changing the appearance of the Amiga's Workbench is all that the program does, mind you; it doesn't try to copy any of Window's idiosyncrasies or the way it carries functions out.

Apart from changing the appearance of the Workbench screen, the disk that contains *Windows Bench* also contains a number of useful utilities and other bits and pieces, including the file utility *SID* and the virus killer *Kill Da Virus III*, all of which operate under the new-look desktop, with its changed colours and smaller fonts. Many of these utilities are handy to have in their own right, and the compiler of the disk, Mike Doodson, also known as Mikesoft, seems to have gone to the trouble of not only making the disk look good but work well also.



More than just a pretty face, *Windows Bench* attempts to copy the visual appearance of Microsoft Windows while also providing a number of oher useful programs and utilies

Windows Bench comes on two disks, the second disk containing the documentation for the programs that are included on the main disk. This is a good feature for two reasons: firstly, the documentation is necessary and has to be included because that is a condition of much PD software; more practically, the documentation doesn't take up valuable disk space on the main disk so that there is more room to make sure that the programs work and work well.

While *Windows Bench*'s overall usefulness is limited to aesthetics, it is undeniably an improvement on the normal Amiga Workbench. This, plus the programs on the disks and the accompanying documentation make the package well worth a look. One thing to note is that while *Windows Bench* itself is PD, the author recommends that you support the authors of the other programs on the disks, most of which are shareware.

AMIGA 86%

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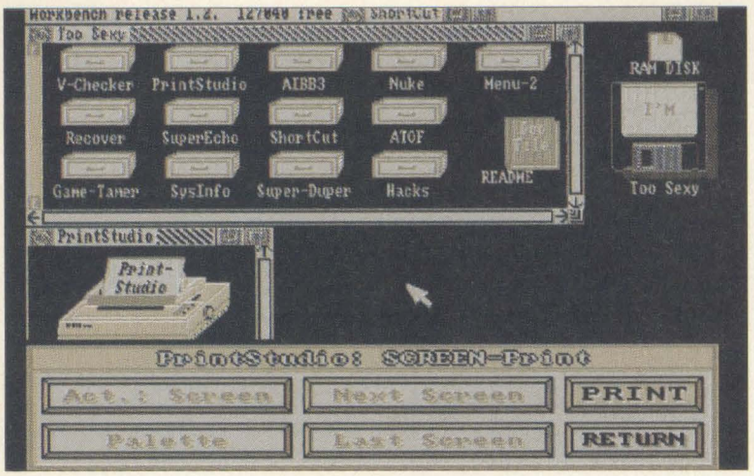


Rather attractively presented, *PrintStudio* combines several printing, editing and display utilities in one program, using simple icons to select and switch between the different functions

cont. from p22

PrintStudio (Shareware)

Amiga • Disk 1466 • 17 Bit Software, PO Box 97, Wakefield, WF1 1XX
☎ 0924 366982

Usually when you want to save or print graphics and text on the Amiga you have to use a number of utilities, each of which handles one particular function. Because this is obviously a hassle, *PrintStudio* has been created to try and cut-down on the number of utilities you use to do these functions, trying to encompass them all within one program.

Among *PrintStudio*'s functions are an ability to print out hard copies of complete IFF files, parts of these files and any individual windows that you have currently displayed on the Workbench desktop.

As well as pictures, *PrintStudio* can also cut and print complete text files or extracts from them. The images that are saved can then be customised as *PrintStudio* enables you to change the colour of both the windows and pictures before printing.

As far as printing is concerned, *PrintStudio* uses the same printer driver as defined by Preferences. If you want to change this setting, there is an option of loading Preferences from within the program.

All of *PrintStudio*'s functions are accessible from requesters which then enable you to access further sub-menus. There are four main menus, dealing with IFF-ILBM (for graphics files), text (for text files), screen (for switching between the screens you have displayed) and preferences (to load up Preferences to change settings such as printer drivers).

In use *PrintStudio* is a reasonably powerful and convenient program. The only misgiving I really have of it is that it sometimes seems a little unstable on an unexpanded machine, crashing on a number of occasions if an IFF file is loaded in. Whether this is because there is not enough memory or owing to a fault in the program I'm not sure.

Nevertheless, if you're prepared to take the chance then *PrintStudio* is well worth looking at – it successfully combines what would normally be several utilities into the one program.

AMIGA 71%

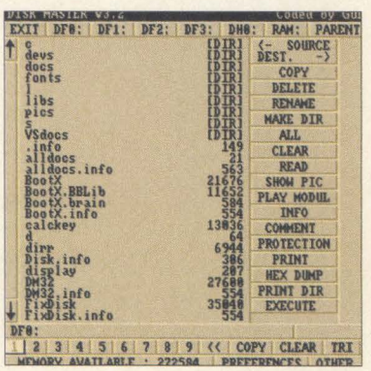
Diskmaster 3.2 (PD)

Amiga • Disk 2057 • Virus Free PD, 23 Elborough Road, Moredon, Swindon, Wiltshire SN2 2LS ☎ 0793 512321

While *SID* is generally regarded as the premier file utility on the Amiga – and deservedly so – there is another similar tool that is also impressive: *Diskmaster*.

All of the basic file functions are available, and instead of being arranged at the bottom of the screen – as they are with *SID* – they are positioned vertically down the centre of the screen.

Unlike *SID*, which has to load in other tools, *Diskmaster* can, for example, display IFF files by itself.



***Diskmaster* may not quite be a replacement for *SID* but it's nevertheless a useful and easy program to use. With it, you can accomplish almost all the file and disk operations you could ever imagine in your wildest dreams, and do a few other things as well...**

Diskmaster, as its name implies, is also capable of disk operations. Thus, it can format, copy, verify and even destroy disks. It can also write bootblocks on disks to prevent them from being infected by viruses (the bootblock variety, that is). Other disk operations, such as changing the name of individual files or even the disk itself, are also possible.

A reasonably small file in terms of the amount of memory it takes up, *Diskmaster* is capable of quite a lot. This is one instance where size definitely isn't everything...

AMIGA 78%

Get you life in order – well, your disk drive at any rate

Cat Disk (Shareware)

PC • Grampian Shareware, 25 Grampian Gardens, Dyce, Aberdeen AB2 0LF
☎ 0224 724234

You know the story: you need to find that important file but you've forgotten which disk and what directory it's been put in. To end your disk-hunting woes, *Cat Disk* is a utility that enables you to organise your disks in such a way that makes it easy to find a file from within a large disk collection.

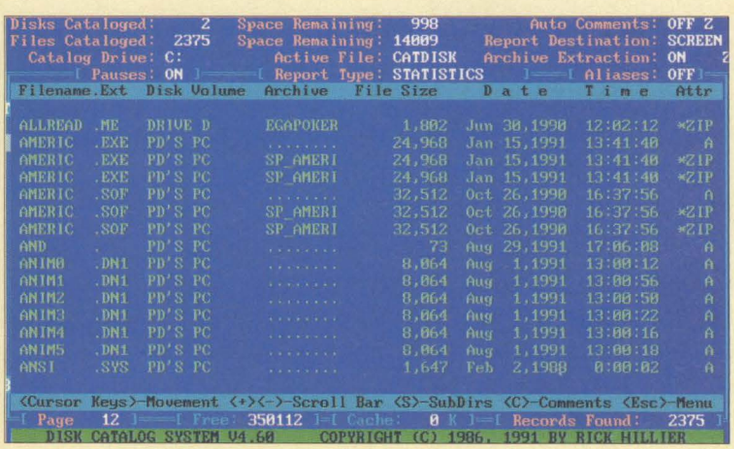
It does this by creating a catalogue of all the files on one or even several disks, whether they be of the floppy or hard variety. Unlike the various DOS front-ends that are available, *Cat Disk* will not let you run programs from within it; it just lists these files in a more comprehensive way than the other programs do.

Apart from that not much more needs to be said. The program whisks through the directory of the disk you want to catalogue, making a note of all the filenames, which directory they can be found in and how much space they take up. If you want, you can add your own comments to the filenames. The catalogue that you create can then be printed on-screen or sent to a printer.

There are a couple of other features worth mentioning. *Cat Disk* is able to read the directory contents of archived files, including those with the file suffix ARC, ZOO, LZH and ZIP. It can also extract colour and resolution information from GIF graphics files. All this information can then be incorporated into your catalogue.

Cat Disk is a simple program, but its ease of use and the way it can recognise a wide range of different file types makes it worth a look if you have got a large collection of disks or files.

AMIGA 76%


Disks Cataloged: 2 Space Remaining: 998 Auto Comments: OFF
Files Cataloged: 2375 Space Remaining: 14009 Report Destination: SCREEN
Catalog Drive: C: Active File: CATDISK Archive Extraction: ON
Pauses: ON Report Type: STATISTICS Aliases: OFF
Filename.Ext Disk Volume Archive File Size Date Time Attr
ALLREAD .ME DRIVE D EGAPOKER 1,802 Jun 30,1990 12:02:12 *ZIP
AMERIC .EXE PD'S PC ..... 24,968 Jan 15,1991 13:41:40 A
AMERIC .EXE PD'S PC SP_AMERI 24,968 Jan 15,1991 13:41:40 *ZIP
AMERIC .EXE PD'S PC SP_AMERI 24,968 Jan 15,1991 13:41:40 *ZIP
AMERIC .SOF PD'S PC ..... 32,512 Oct 26,1990 16:37:56 A
AMERIC .SOF PD'S PC SP_AMERI 32,512 Oct 26,1990 16:37:56 *ZIP
AMERIC .SOF PD'S PC SP_AMERI 32,512 Oct 26,1990 16:37:56 *ZIP
AND . PD'S PC ..... 73 Aug 29,1991 17:06:08 A
ANIM0 .DN1 PD'S PC ..... 8,064 Aug 1,1991 13:00:12 A
ANIM1 .DN1 PD'S PC ..... 8,064 Aug 1,1991 13:00:56 A
ANIM2 .DN1 PD'S PC ..... 8,064 Aug 1,1991 13:00:50 A
ANIM3 .DN1 PD'S PC ..... 8,064 Aug 1,1991 13:00:22 A
ANIM4 .DN1 PD'S PC ..... 8,064 Aug 1,1991 13:00:16 A
ANIM5 .DN1 PD'S PC ..... 8,064 Aug 1,1991 13:00:18 A
ANSI .SYS PD'S PC ..... 1,647 Feb 2,1988 8:00:02 A
<Cursor Keys>-Movement <+><->-Scroll Bar <S>-SubDirs <C>-Comments <Esc>-Menu
Page 12 Free: 350112 Cache: 0 K Records Found: 2375
DISK CATALOG SYSTEM V4.60 COPYRIGHT (C) 1986, 1991 BY RICK HILLIER

With *Cat Disk*, you can get all those files into some sort of order. You might even discover there's files secreted away that you didn't even know you had!

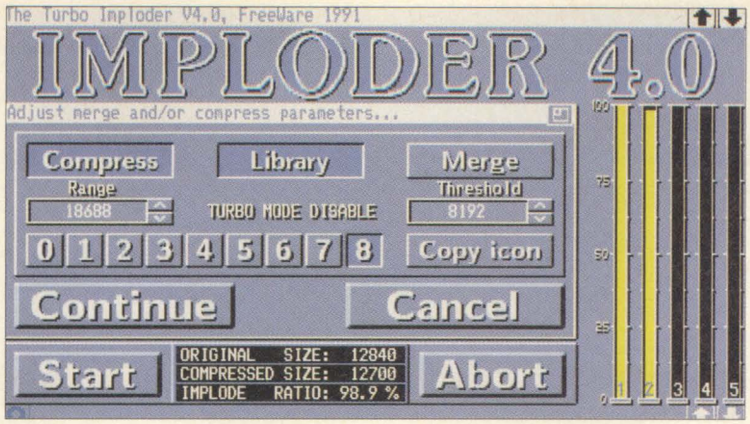
Imploder 4.0 (PD)

Amiga • U640 • NBS

1 Chain Lane, Newport, Isle of Wight PO30 5QA

☎ 0983 529594

Following in the tradition of releasing previously commercial programs in the public domain, *Imploder* has arrived on the scene. And this isn't because it's so crap they couldn't sell it, either – it not only looks good but performs well against other similar programs that are available in the public domain.



Save disk space by compressing your files with *Imploder*. Once a commercial program, *Imploder*'s sheer power can compact some files up to a third of their original size

Why it was released in to the public domain I don't know. Maybe because *Imploder* was the only commercially available compacter and it couldn't justify this in comparison to other similar programs available in PD.

So, just what is *Imploder*? It is a utility that compacts both executable and data files. Compacting is a process that compresses the size of files in varying degrees, sometimes to sizes as small as one-third the file size of the original program.

When *Imploder* first loads it looks a lot like a demo; music playing and

cont. on p26

Simply, absolutely fontastic!

There are so many printers available in the market today. You know what I mean, 9-pin, 24-pin, ink-jet, laser and other varieties. Most of these come with standard fonts that determine how good the print quality is. To add more fonts usually requires additional font cards or memory, which all cost a lot of extra money.

For those who don't want to go to that expense, or who want to push their printer to the limits, there is a viable alternative. These are programs that enable you to redefine the standard fonts of your printer.

LC24-200 Fonts (Licenceware)

Amiga • LPD52 • Déja Vu, 25 Park Road, Wigan, Lancs WN6 7AA

☎ 0942 495261

LC24-200 Fonts is a disk packed with replacement fonts for this popular Star 24-pin printer and also contains an editor that enables you to design your own.

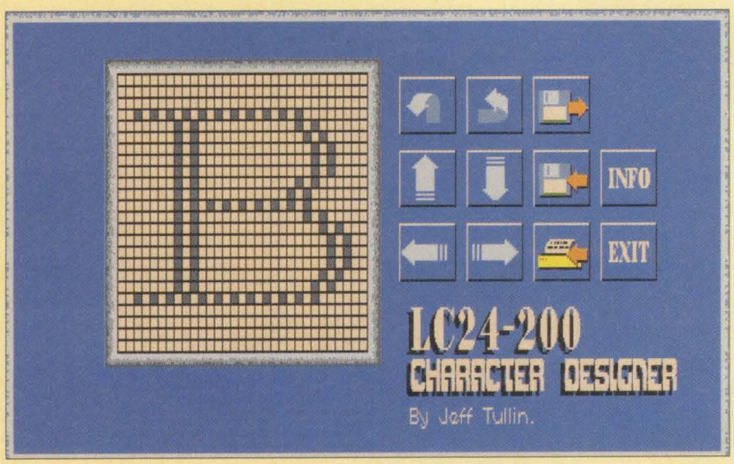
As well as being able to re-define the fonts on the Star Beast (one of the most most popular 24-pin printers around), the programmer also claims that it will work with a number of other 24-pin printers, including models from Epson, Amstrad, NEC and Panasonic, although he also admits that he hasn't tested the fonts on all of them.

Two editing programs are supplied on the disk; one lets you redesign a complete character set; the other enables you to design an individual character. So, if you want to re-define just one character you don't have to redefine or copy the remainder of the characters you don't want to change.

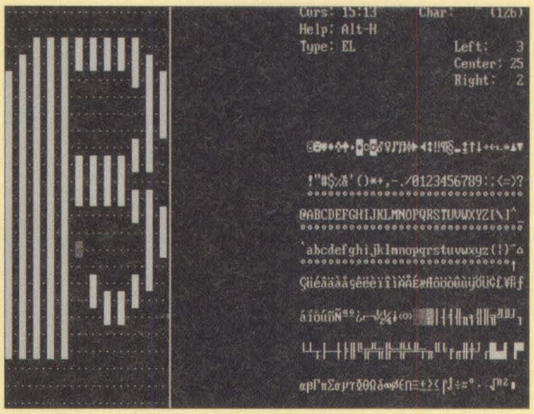
Most printers have a prescribed area of memory available for the downloading of fonts, often up to 32K, and this is the feature that these programs take advantage of. Once the re-defined character set has been sent to the printer (the program does all this for you) it will stay in the printer's memory until it is switched off or reset. If you reset the Amiga the printer will also be reset, although if you're prepared to take the risk a wire in the printer cable can be disconnected to prevent this happening, but this could a bit technical for some people.

This disk is useful for owners of 24-pin printers who aren't prepared to buy add-on font and memory cards, or if you just want to have some printing pleasure without much of a financial outlay. For these people, *LC24-200 Fonts* is well worth a look.

AMIGA **71%**



While it looks like some sort of graphics package, *LC24-200 Fonts* isn't. Rather it lets you design your own 24-pin fonts to download into the program's supported printers



By using a myriad of keyboard commands, *FontEd* lets you design your own custom 24-pin printer fonts, and can even let you use them from within your favourite word processing package

FontEd (Shareware)

PC • Disks 2837A, B • The Public Domain and Shareware Library, Winscombe House, Beacon Road, Crowborough, Sussex TN6 1UL

☎ 0892 663298

Another program that enables you to edit fonts for 24-pin printers is *FontEd*, for the PC. This tool comes on two disks and can not only help you to define printer fonts, but also fonts that are displayed on-screen as well.

FontEd supports the Epson LC and NEC P6 ranges of 24-pin printers, and other printers compatible with these standards that support downloaded fonts.

Its editing commands are fairly comprehensive, with individual characters being able to be copied, mirrored and otherwise manipulated. All of these functions are accessed by a myriad of key combinations which take a bit of time to get used to; thankfully there is a built-in help menu to refer to if you forget the commands (scatterbrain!)

One function that is useful in a much wider context is *FontEd*'s ability to automatically create a table that contains information on the fonts which then enables them to be incorporated and used by professional word processors. This means, for example, that with a bit of effort you could incorporate characters from foreign languages in your documents without having to resort to a specialised word processor.

FontEd's appearance on-screen is hardly attractive, but it is functional and ensures that the program can be used by PCs with even the most primitive of screen displays. That said, the programmer does warn that *FontEd* may not work with some non-standard BIOSs as it maps the screen and keyboard differently.

FontEd's flexibility is considerable and in spite of the primitive nature of its presentation it is a program worth looking out for.

PC **66%**

cont. from p22

equaliser bars bouncing on-screen. Underneath this seemingly trivial exterior, though, is a seriously powerful program.

Using a simple yet attractive front-end, *Imploder* has few options. Once you decide that you want to compact a file, you load it into the program. There are a range of eight compression settings, each differing in the degree they compress the file and the time it takes to enact that compression. Basically, the more effiently compressed you want the file to be, the longer it will take to be compacted.

When a file is being compressed, the bars at the right side of the screen – the equaliser bars – gradually decrease in level the further the program compacts. One bar shows how much of the program has been compacted so far, while another gives an indication of how big the resultant file size will be compared to the original, uncompressed file.

Once the file is compacted it can then be saved. Job done.

Imploder is a powerful tool which would be handy for most Amiga owners, whether you're a programmer, or even if you want to make the files smaller on your Workbench disk.

AMIGA **71%**

DiskMech (Shareware)

ST • Disk CH001/U • Captain Hack's PD, 19 Latimer Drive, Laindon, Essex SS15 4AD
☎ 0268 416888

Disks. What would we do without them? 'Not much really', is the quick and rather easy answer to that. Because disks are such an essential part of computing, it would be nice to have programs that not only increase our understanding of just how they work, but also enable us to examine the fundamental structure of the disk format itself.

DiskMech is a program that goes some way towards doing this. It is a combined disk analyser, archiver and editor and enables you do examine disks sector by sector, byte for byte.

The Sector Editor enables you to read and edit any sector on a disk, regardless of its size, what the track number is and what side the track is on. The Format Editor, which is also part of this program, enables you to create any type of sector label, customise ID fields and specify the length of the gaps between sectors as well as a number of other features which get increasingly complicated as you go on.

As well as these powerful editing features, *DiskMech* can analyse disks for non-standard formats, and is also capable of copying disks and even individual sectors.

All these functions are obtainable through three main pull-down menus, which are functional although not too impressive to look at. One minor point against *DiskMech* is that once you start an operation, such as analysing the tracks on a disk, you can't stop it; this can be a time-consuming waste if you realize that you have have accidentally told it to do something you don't really want it to. If you accidentally set it to start formatting, it could be nothing short of disastrous.

While *DiskMech* sounds like a complex utility to those who aren't used to the sort of functions it performs, beginners should find it easy to use – it's so friendly, in fact, that it almost invites you to delve further into understanding disk formats (and more experienced computer users will get good use out of it too!)

ST **67%**

Equally useful for both beginners and advanced users, *DiskMech* enables you to examine and edit the data on floppy disks right down to the lowest level

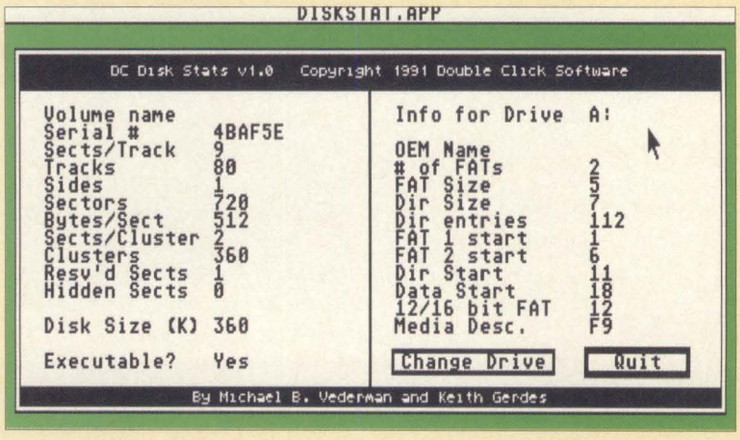
Just a couple of clicks, and you have a whole new batch of utilities

Double Click Utilities (PD)

ST • UTL380 • Floppyshop, 45 Provst Graham Avenue, Hazelhead, Aberdeen AB1 8HB
☎ 0224 312756

This disk contains quite a few PD programs programmed by an American software company called Double Click Software. Most of them are very small, and only have one or two functions, but they are nevertheless pretty useful to have around the house. To give you some idea of the type of programs that are included on the disk, here are a few examples:

- *DC Disk Dump* –Alphabetises and dumps the listing of a disk directory to the screen, on to disk or to a printer
- *DC Floppy Controller* – Enables you to add or remove floppy drives from your system through software – the computer won't recognise them if you don't want it to
- *DC Homey* – Puts the mouse pointer in the centre of the screen when you press a combination of keys. Why? So you always know where the mouse pointer is, or can at least find it easily!
- *DC Lefty Arrow* –This eccentric little file makes the mouse pointer 'arrow' point to the right instead of left, which is supposedly for the benefit of left-handed ST users. (I'd love to know if left handed Amiga users do find this useful.)
- *DC Mouse Saver* – Turns the mouse off after a defined period of time if it hasn't been moved, and then turns it back on when it is



Though it's not all that impressive to look at on-screen, *DC Utilities* is a compilation of small yet handy tools that can make using your ST that little bit easier – *DC Stat* is one of those tools, clearly giving you essential information about your disks

- *DC Reserve* – Reserves a pre-defined amount of memory when you execute a program
- *DC Right* – Lets you click once with the right mouse button to achieve the same result as if you double-clicked the left mouse button. Useful for executing programs quickly, as well as saving you some strain on your index finger
- *DC R-T Mag* (Real-Time Magnifier) – Magnifies the screen area immediately around the mouse pointer
- *DC Stat* – Gives information about the disks, including its sectors, tracks, bytes per sector, FAT, directory size etc

At least several of these programs would be useful to ST owners and in spite of how trivial they may seem initially, they can turn into essential tools after you've used them for a while. You won't know how you possibly lived without them!

ST **82%**

Cartoon Brushes (PD)

Amiga • U032 • Software Expressions
Suite 4, Hebron House, Sion Road, Bedminster, Bristol BS3 3BD ☎ 0272 637634

Using a graphics package to be creative is one thing, but sometimes it doesn't hurt to 'borrow' a few ideas from other sources, or even blatantly rip them off like this disk does.

Cartoon Brushes is a disk containing a selection of brushes (no surprise there) which are based on characters from popular cartoon series. A wide range of cartoons are covered, and there are characters such as Disney's Mickey Mouse, Garfield and Popeye, plus many of their famous friends.

Take the Mickey, add a touch of creative inspiration and soon you could be the next Walt Disney. Or perhaps not. *Cartoon Brushes* could be the push you need to make it into the world of cartoon animation

Brushes are small snippets of IFF graphics files that can be imported (ie, loaded) into other graphics and animation packages. With these programs you can edit the brushes and, if your program has the facility, even animate them.

None of the brushes are exactly artistic masterpieces (more like the *Rolf Harris' Cartoon Time* versions than the real things), but they're not badly drawn either; average would be a good word to describe them.

If you're looking at improving your drawing abilities, or are interested in getting involved with cartoon animation even, then this could well be a good place to start.

AMIGA 71%

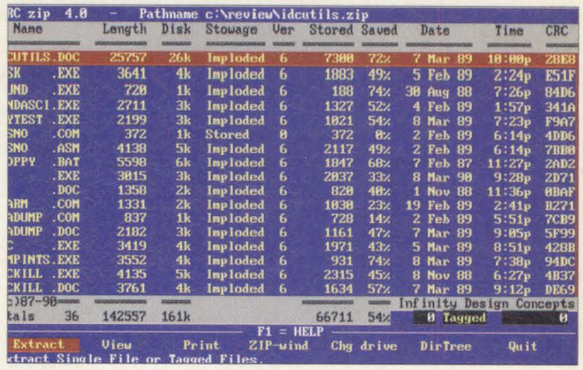
Narc (Shareware)

PC • Disk 938 • Softcell Services Shareware, 25 Maywood, Brynna, Pontyclun CF7 9PZ ☎ 0443 238630

A lot of the software that comes from bulletin boards and on disks from PD and shareware libraries for the PC is in archived form. What this means is that the several files that are used by a program have all been linked and compressed into one large file. This is handy as the compression means that files can fit easily on a disk, and in the case of bulletin boards a single large file is much easier to download than a lot of smaller ones.

The downside to all this is the inconvenience of actually getting these programs out of the archive. Most of the popular archivers, such as *Zip* or *LHArc*, use separate programs to extract the files. These work from the typically unfriendly MS-DOS command line, the result being that you have to type in a whole string of commands and sub-commands to get the archived files back into their original form.

Narc is a program that gets around this by providing an easy-to-use front-end to the popular archiver *Zip*, and also the more archaic *Arc*. *Narc* enables you to switch switch between directories, highlighting the files that have been archived with these two tools. And when it's found such an archive, *Narc* will let you see what files it contains so that you can quickly estimate how much disk space you need to store the dearchived file. If you should decide to dearchive it, then *Narc* will do that as well.


RC zip 4.0 - Pathname c:\review\idcutils.zip
Name Length Disk Stowage Ver Stored Saved Date Time CRC
CUTILS.DOC 25757 26k Imploded 6 7380 72% 7 Mar 89 10:00p 20E8
SK .EXE 3641 4k Imploded 6 1883 49% 5 Feb 89 2:24p E51F
UND .EXE 720 1k Imploded 6 188 74% 30 Aug 88 7:26p 04D6
NDASCI.EXE 2711 3k Imploded 6 1327 52% 4 Feb 89 1:57p 341A
YTEST .EXE 2199 3k Imploded 6 1021 54% 8 Mar 89 7:23p F9A7
SNO .COM 372 1k Stored 0 372 0% 2 Feb 89 6:14p 4DD6
SNO .ASM 4138 5k Imploded 6 2117 49% 2 Feb 89 6:14p 7BB8
OPPY .BAT 5598 6k Imploded 6 1847 68% 7 Feb 87 11:27p 20D2
.EXE 3015 3k Imploded 6 2037 33% 8 Mar 90 9:28p 2D71
.DOC 1358 2k Imploded 6 820 40% 1 Nov 88 11:36p 0BAF
ARM .COM 1331 2k Imploded 6 1030 23% 19 Feb 89 2:41p B271
ADUMP .COM 837 1k Imploded 6 728 14% 2 Feb 89 5:51p 7CB9
ADUMP .DOC 2182 3k Imploded 6 1161 47% 7 Mar 89 9:05p 5F99
C .EXE 3419 4k Imploded 6 1971 43% 5 Mar 89 8:51p 42BB
MPINTS.EXE 3552 4k Imploded 6 931 74% 8 Mar 89 7:38p 94DC
CKILL .EXE 4135 5k Imploded 6 2315 45% 8 Nov 88 6:27p 4B37
CKILL .DOC 3761 4k Imploded 6 1634 57% 7 Mar 89 9:12p DE69
)87-90 Infinity Design Concepts
tals 36 142557 161k 66711 54% 0 Tagged 0
F1 = HELP
Extract View Print ZIP-wind Chg drive DirTree Quit
xtract Single File or Tagged Files.

With *Narc* dearchiving those Zip and Arc files is as easy as highlighting a filename – all those nasty command line options are history

In use *Narc* is a doddle to understand, and while it doesn't exactly do much, what it does do it does well.

PC 68%

AMP Hard Disk Directory (PD)

ST • Disk CH001/U • Captain Hack's, 19 Latimer Drive, Laindon, Essex SS15 4AD ☎ 0268 416888

File copying utilities for the ST appear to be thin on the ground, and those

cont. on p28

How does your PC sound? Better, thanks to PC Studio

PC Studio (Shareware)

PC • Download from BBS...

Unless you have a Soundblaster or Ad-Lib sound card for the PC, its sound speaker usually resembles a constipated canary more than a musical instrument. Even though the PC has enough memory to store and play digitised samples, this seem to be rarely utilised. While the Amiga, ST and Macintosh have a vast availability of samples, you're more likely to find the lost city of Atlantis than a impressive library of PC samples.

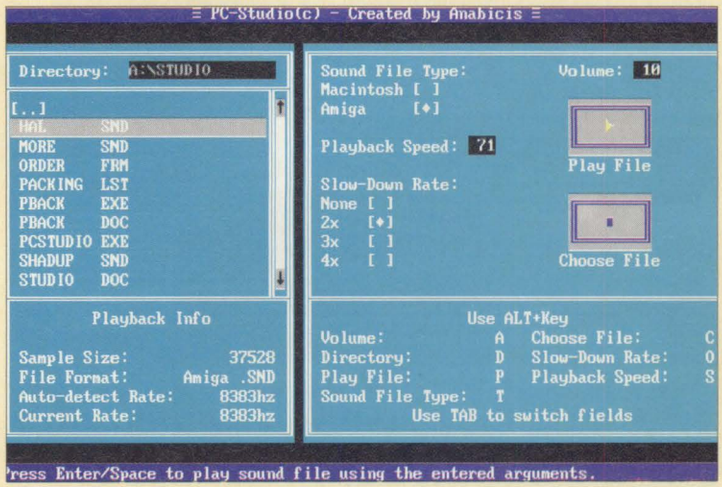
PC Studio is a tool that enables you to load and play samples created for the Amiga and Macintosh through the humble PC speaker. Samples can be customised through various settings, including volume and the speed at which they are played.

The quality of the sample playback is very good – some of the samples making the PC speaker sound much better than it really is (or at least what we've been led to believe it sounds like by unimaginative programmers).

To get the samples on to PC disks for *PC Studio* to use is easy. In the case of the Amiga, the samples can be transferred to PC disks by using a program like *MessySID*, reviewed earlier on these pages. And because most new Macs are capable of writing to PC disks using *Apple File Exchange*, transferring samples between the machines is easy.

In reality *PC Studio* is probably not very useful, at least in a practical sense, but it is one of the few programs available that will let you experiment with high quality samples on the PC without going to much expense.

PC 76%



Quality sound on the PC? Huh! I doubt it... But! With *PC Studio* you can play Amiga and Macintosh samples to make your PC sound better than ever before

cont. from p27

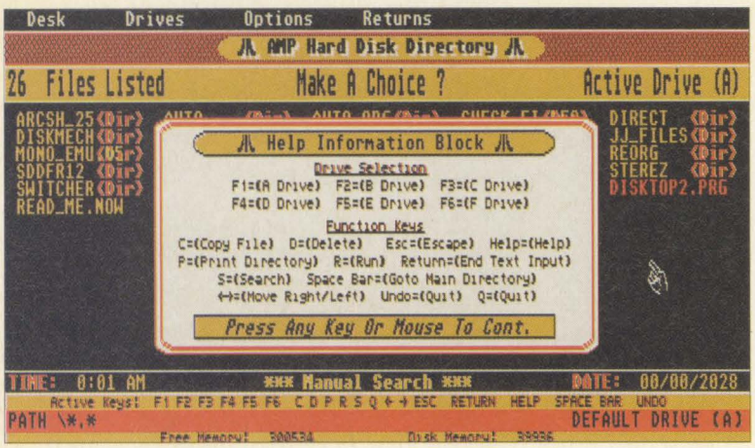
that are around seem to vary in age and quality. A wise man once said that people mature with age, and if you take this as meaning that maturity is a good thing, then *AMP Hard Disk Directory*, programmed in 1987, lives up to the cliché.

AMP Hard Disk Directory is a tool that enables the manipulation of files on either floppy drives or, as the name blatantly states, hard disk drives. Files on any of these devices (provided they're connected to your ST, of course) can be copied or deleted.

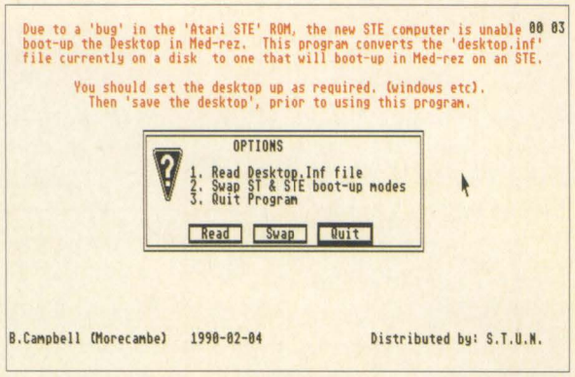
This probably doesn't sound too impressive on paper (and really, it isn't), but in practice these simple commands are really handy. And the way these functions are accessed is made easier by the convenient employment of the right mouse button, which lets you swap between copying, deleting and the other modes at the press of the button.

One useful feature that *AMP Hard Disk Directory* has, especially if you have a hard disk, is a file search utility – you type in the name of a file, including wildcards if you aren't completely sure what it is, and *AMP Hard Disk Directory* will do a search of the selected device.

Ancient it may be, but if all programs were written with this level of foresight then the PD world would be a happier place.



Simple by name and simple by nature, *AMP Hard Disk Directory* is nevertheless a competent file management tool, especially handy for those STs with hard dr


Due to a 'bug' in the 'Atari STE' ROM, the new STE computer is unable boot-up the Desktop in Med-rez. This program converts the 'desktop.inf' file currently on a disk to one that will boot-up in Med-rez on an STE.
You should set the desktop up as required. (windows etc).
Then 'save the desktop', prior to using this program.
OPTIONS
1. Read Desktop.Inf file
2. Swap ST & STE boot-up modes
3. Quit Program
Read
Swap
Quit
B.Campbell (Morecambe) 1990-02-04
Distributed by: S.T.U.N.

Curing a bug in the STE's ROM, *STE Boot* enables your computer to boot up and go into medium resolution mode immediately

STE Boot (PD)

ST • BBS Download

Apart from the compatibility problems experienced by STE owners when the machine was first released, there was one bug, contained in its ROM, that prevented it from booting up in medium resolution.

As most ST owners know, while low resolution is useful for a lot of programs, there are a fair few that need medium resolution up and running before they will even think about jumping into your computer's memory. Apart from that, most document files are far more readable in the slightly higher resolution.

Normally to switch between the two resolutions you would have to go to the Set Preferences menu and set it from there – a simple task, but one which gets increasingly annoying the more times you have to do it.

To get around this the basic ST could have its DESKTOP.INF file changed to make it boot up in medium resolution, but the STE's bug prevents it from doing so.

In short, *STE Boot* is a program that will let STE owners edit their DESKTOP.INF file so that it gets around this bug. You set the desktop up how you want it and then use *STE Boot* to save it and set things up in medium resolution the next time that you boot from the disk you save the updated DESKTOP.INF file to.

STE Boot is only useful for STE owners admittedly, but if you do have an ST and are frustrated at the number of times you have to set your screen to medium resolution then this could be the tool you're looking for.

PD

ST 58%

It takes a minute to copy a disk – time for a game of Tetris

Tetracopy (PD)

Amiga • Disk 1234 • Crazy Joe's, 145 Effingham Street, Rotherham S65 1BL
☎ 0709 829286

If you copy a lot of PD disks, it can be one of the most boring experiences known to humankind, rivalling watching paint dry or 'The Brian Walden Interview' in the stakes for a sure-fire occupation to put you to sleep.

So what would make this task a bit more enjoyable? How about a game? How about a version of one of the most addictive games of all time? How about a game that's so absorbing, you might even forget that you're copying disks at all?

You may have got the hint from the title of this program; *Tetracopy* lets you play the superb game *Tetris* while your Amiga is handling all the more business-like tasks of copying the data from device to device. *Tetracopy* is a very competent version of the now-classic puzzle game, almost worth getting hold of purely for entertainment reasons.

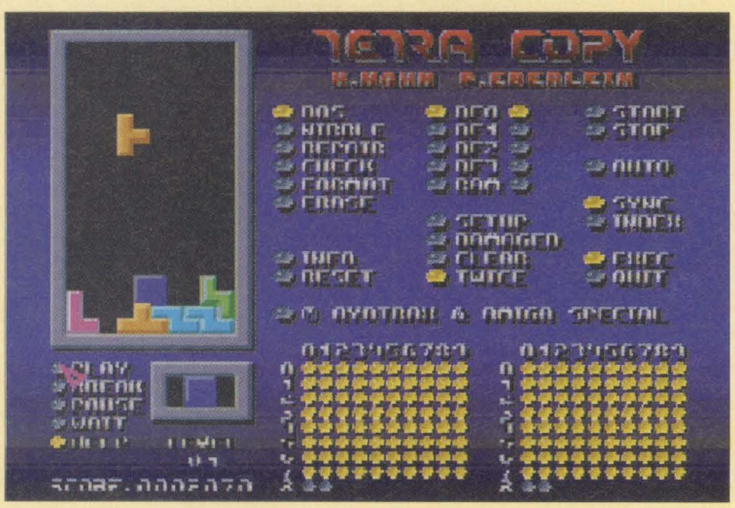
Anyway, we're not here for games are we? Just how does *Tetracopy* shape up as a copier? Well, it's almost as good as the game, dare I say it.

All the standard file-copying functions are available in the program. If you have more than one disk drive you can copy from one to any of the others. There is also a choice of copying modes, ranging from the basic but nevertheless useful DOScopy, to the more powerful Nibble copy functions.

The more powerful the disk copying mode, the longer it takes to copy a disk, but such powerful modes could be necessary for some of the custom megademos and suchlike that are available.

As well as the copying functions, *Tetracopy* is capable of several other useful tasks, including repairing damaged disks, checking a disk for damaged tracks, formatting disks and erasing disks, all of which contribute to making *Tetracopy* a program worth getting.

In fact, if there is a fundamental flaw to the program it would be that the game of *Tetris* does make copying disks so much more of an enjoyable task that it's a hassle having to pause the game in order to change disks!



It may look like the classic game of *Tetris* (and, in fact, it is) but *Tetracopy* is much more than that – it's a pretty powerful disk copying utility as well

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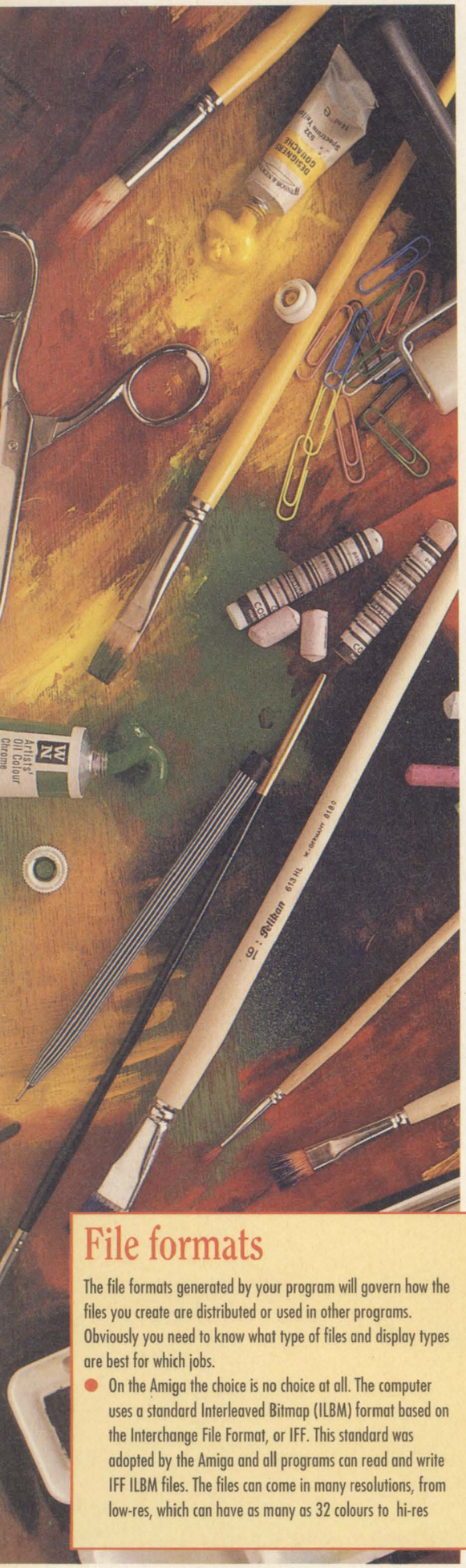


State of the art

Pens and paintbrushes are a thing of the past. The computer has made it easy for anyone to create graphical masterpieces, and there's no need to splash out on an expensive commercial programs when there are so many excellent paint packages in the public domain. Phil South draws some conclusions on the whole spectrum of PD art...

The traditional view of PD applications is that they are idiosyncratic programs that do jobs that no other programs – particularly commercial ones – do and aren't worth marketing because the product is too specialised. But increasingly these days you can find a lot of PD and shareware software that act as quality low-end replacement for all sort applications, covering such areas as music, business and graphics.

It's taken a while for PD graphics programs to come to the fore, as initial efforts were nothing to write (or even draw) home about. But now it's got to the stage where everyone can design their own programs and compile them using BASIC compilers or the *STOS* or *AMOS* programs, and this is the source of a lot of the new software around

Art programs have been around on computers since the very early days of home computing. Some of the first were on the C64 and Sinclair Spectrum. These computers had a limit of 16 and 8 colours respectively, and, as they were not definable in any way, you were stuck with whatever colours the system programmers thought would be a good idea. These were usually so garish they would make an Amazonian parrot look like John Major.

It wasn't until 16-bit computers came along that more subtle colours and painting programs came along. Soon you had the ST with its 16 colour palette, but with higher resolutions and a choice of colours that you could mix for yourself. Then the Amiga came out and that had 4096 colours in maximum overdrive HAM (Hold And Modify) mode. The PC had VGA (Video Graphics Array) which gave you 256 colours and resolutions so high it was difficult to make out a single pixel on the screen.

Paint packages then came into their own, and it was clear that as long as you had lots of colours, you could paint and draw things previously only possible with conventional materials, and this got a lot of people into computer graphics who were previously scornful of the computer's ability to produce anything artistic.

Pixel perfection

Art packages generally fall into two categories, bitmapped and structured. Bitmap programs are the most widely used, and these create screens full of graphics by setting each pixel on the screen to a certain colour using a mouse or even a joystick. This makes lines and areas of colour on the screen, imitating the way you'd produce art on a sheet of paper using real world materials like pastel crayons, paint or watercolour. You can then save the end

File formats

The file formats generated by your program will govern how the files you create are distributed or used in other programs. Obviously you need to know what type of files and display types are best for which jobs.

- On the Amiga the choice is no choice at all. The computer uses a standard Interleaved Bitmap (ILBM) format based on the Interchange File Format, or IFF. This standard was adopted by the Amiga and all programs can read and write IFF ILBM files. The files can come in many resolutions, from low-res, which can have as many as 32 colours to hi-res pictures of twice the resolution but fewer colours. As well as these two standards you have the slightly quirky HAM standard which allows you 4096 colours on screen at once, and that's more than enough colour for most people.
- The Atari ST is a little less well-served by standards, although in the public domain the *Neochrome* or NEO file format is the most widely used, closely followed by the *Degas* lo-res or PI1 files, med-res or PI2 and hi-res mono or PI3 formats.
- The PC has more graphics standards that you can shake a joystick at, but the most popular one in the public domain is PCX or *PC Paintbrush* format. This can have up to 256 colours and uses VGA high resolution screen formats.

The thing to remember with graphics files is that the more colours you have and the more resolution you have, the bigger your files are going to be, and if the graphics you are doing are for a program, you'd better find ways of using less than the max. For example, if a graphics file takes up 70K – and they can quite easily with 256 or 4096 colours – that's a big chunk out of your base level machine, of perhaps 512 or 640K. And that's just one picture. Say you want five or six flying around in there, where's the program to drive all these graphics going to go? (Into the bit bucket, that's where!) Obviously, this is an exaggerated example, but you catch my drift. So use fewer colours, and learn that lower resolutions can be just as artistic as higher ones.

results as a graphic file that can be incorporated into a DTP program as illustration, or used in a game as a background or sprite, or you can simply print it out and admire it. Bitmaps are so-called because they take the form of a series of bits 'mapped' across the screen, and each dot on the picture equates to a number in the file.

Structured graphics are a more professional item, and you'll find these in CAD (Computer Aided Design) programs used to drive plotters or laser printers. CAD software doesn't create the finished product itself, but drives the printer to produce smooth lines and curves on paper. This process of producing technical drawings used to be done by hand, but the trick with computers is that you can move the lines around without having to rub them out – the lines on the screen in a CAD program are movable, as if they were objects on a drawing board, and each line retains its size and shape when moved. The bitmap representation of the lines on the screen is merely a low grade impression of what the finished drawing will look like, rather than the finished artwork itself.

It's easy in one way to compare computer art with conventional materials, like crayons and paint, but in other ways the two things aren't the same at all. Conventional materials offer you the same amount of colour ranges and precision, but the computer offers you limitless editing, and the ability to record your work at different stages of the operation.

"Nowhere in conventional art can you get the same saturation and range of colour effects that can achieve using a computer."

You could simulate this process by drawing a picture with a pencil, and photocopying the drawing at various stages along the way. Then if you made a mistake instead of rubbing out whole sections you could just go back to a photocopy of an earlier stage you thought was better, and recommence drawing from that point. With a computer art package you can go back to a previous save, and load it into your machine over and over again, trying out new ways of getting the effect you're looking for.

Saturation point

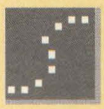
Apart from any considerations of editing, and the precision with which you can edit in magnified modes, the main difference between a solid medium like paint and an electronic medium like computer painting is colour. Nowhere in conventional art can you get the same saturation and range of colour effects that you can get using a computer. The artist David Hockney says that he likes computer graphics because the screen is like a stained-glass window.

Although some might scorn computer art as being a low-grade of art, it is in fact a whole new medium, as valid as paint, crayon, pencil and paper, canvas or wood. The ways in which a computer artist

Tools of the trade

While every art package has its peculiarities, there are certain functions that are fairly common. Here's a quick run down of some of them, icons courtesy of *Spectrapaint*...

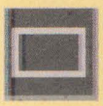
CONTINUOUS LINE: Hold down a mouse button and draw a line by moving the mouse about. Probably the tool you will use the most



DOTTED LINE: Hold down the mouse button and draw a dotted line. The faster you move the mouse the further apart the dots will be

STRAIGHT LINE: Click at one point, hold the mouse button down, move the cursor to a new position and let go – a line will be drawn between the two points

DRAW POLYGON: Shapes such as rectangles, squares and triangles are drawn by clicking at each of their corners – the lines between are drawn automatically



CHANGE WIDTH OF LINES: Some packages give you a selection of line thicknesses, others allow you to manually set the size before you draw

DRAW CIRCLE: Click where you want the centre of the circle to be, keep holding the button down and drag out the circumference to the desired size

SPRAY CAN: Imitates the effect of an aerosol spray and can be applied in a similar way to have heavily or lightly coated areas of colour

CREATE A BRUSH: Select a rectangular area on screen which you can then use as a multi-coloured brush that you can drag around the screen

FLIP BRUSH: Brushes that you have created with the previous tool can be flipped horizontally and vertically for more interesting effects

FILL: If you want to fill an area of your picture with colour, pick the colour, then click on this tool and finally inside the area you want filled

PICK FILL PATTERN: Some packages give you a choice of fill patterns as opposed to just solid colour. Brick work and checker patterns are especially popular

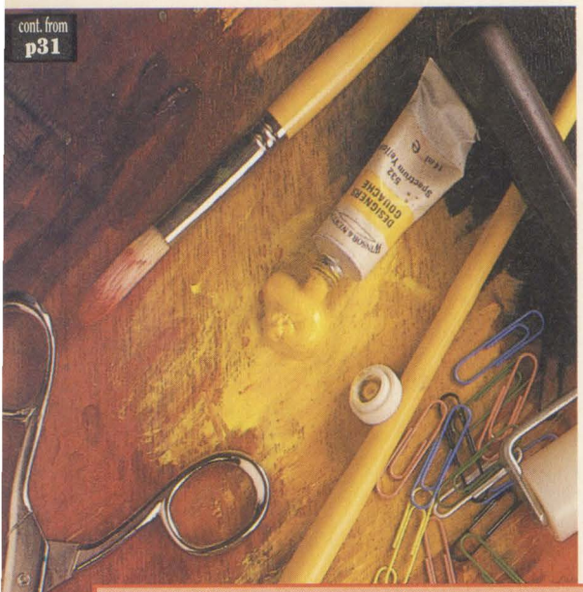
MAGNIFY: This enables you to magnify a specified area of your picture so that you can edit it at a pixel-by-pixel level for precision painting

UNDO: Invaluable! Probably the second most-used tool. The main advantage computer painting has over traditional methods. Mistakes vanish instantly!

PASTE: If you have cut out an area with the Cut A Brush tool it will be held in the memory 'clipboard' and you can paste it back onto your picture with this tool

cont. on p32

cont. from p31



can use the artwork they create on a computer are far more wide ranging than the options open to a painter or sculptor. A painter can't print a book containing his pictures using a computer. A sculptor can't make prints of his work time after time in full colour, at any size. No conventional artist can go on to animate his artwork and make a short film from his work. Computer art opens so many avenues of expression, in the 90s it's impossible to ignore it as a serious option.

But you don't need to be a art pro to use a computer art package. The PD ones especially can be fun, cheap, and might even earn you a few bob.

The primary reason for owning and using a an art program is for the sheer fun of it. It's been a long time, I bet, since you played with colour, scribbling crayons on sheet after sheet of paper. There's nothing childish about exploring colours and shapes, and although you might not think it this is a very creative experience. Obviously once you've got the hang of the program in question you'll draw more meaningful things, but one of the most enjoyable and creative things you can do on a computer is doodle – sounds strange but it's true.

The act of creation needn't be making great works of art; if you make a mark on the screen that wasn't there before you're being creative and artistic. You decided where to make the mark, what colour it was, how thick the line was and whether you leave the mark there or rub it out and start again.

Obviously you can get more technical than this, by using CAD to create technical drawings or bitmap programs to put text or graphics on screen for desktop video. Illustration is also a possible way of earning some money, especially as most magazines you will read (this one you're holding included) will be produced using computers. What better way to add drawings to a magazine than from disk?

Can PD hack it?

Commercial programs are (mostly) very well programmed and a *lot* of money is spent paying programmers (who sometimes spend years working on a program) and on duplication, packaging and distribution costs This is a colossal process, and one you can only embark upon if you already have a lot of money. But if you haven't got lots of money and are a solitary programmer with a lot of talent, what do you do with the produce of your labours?

The PD and shareware concept is born from this need, to be able to distribute unlabelled, unpackaged and unadvertised software globally for the handsome sum of nothing, zilch, zero. Amazingly this process works very well, and a high grade of free software filters through the network very quickly. The quality of the products is similar to that found in commercial software, and in many cases they're just as good. But because the programmer is a single person and not a company, updates and bug fixes take longer to filter through, and sometimes the programs aren't quite as friendly or responsive as they could be.

But in a surprising amount of cases a programmer gets it right and the program is exactly as good as something you can buy. And the good part is that you can try as many PD programs as you like before you settle with one, which is more than you can say for commercial programs of the same type.

The Future

The next generation of painting tools are already with us, with the new ST and TT models from Atari and the various 24-bit options coming out for all machines, plus display adaptors for the Amiga and PC which surpass even professional quality graphics. It remains to be seen if the PD software writers can keep pace, but it probably won't take them long to take advantage of these developments to produce bigger and better PD programs. PD

SpectraPaint 3.0 (Licenceware)

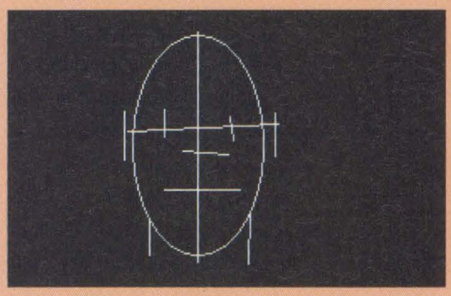
Amiga • Crazy Joe's PD,145 Effingham Street, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S65 1BL ☎ 0709 829286

Written by Twilight Software using *AMOS*, this program does all manner of brilliant tricks, and is by far the most stable Amiga PD graphics program. It feels just like the real thing in use, and as far as I can tell it'll cope with all types of Amiga image.

It has a selection of over 30 drawing tools, enabling you to create virtually any effect you could dream up One unusual tool, called Ray, creates lineszooming out from a central point.

The documentation on the program states that version 3.0 handles HAM images, and although it seems to load them it crashes out almost immediately afterwards. Small buglette there, but I'm sure this will be fixed in the next update (these are frequent because the author lives in the UK).

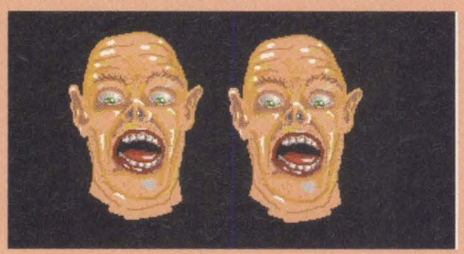
But, as you might expect with a program this good, you need at least 1Mb to be able to use it – though there may be some earlier, pre-version 2.0 512K versions still floating around the public domain



1) So you need a monster for your latest adventure game, eh? First fill in some rough lines to guide you. Use a circle for the head, then lines for the nose, mouth, eyes etc

2) Next sketch in the detail freehand to outline the face, and place all the features. It's useful to have a photo handy for reference at this point

3) Roughly colour the face using the fill tool, and add some preliminary shading, based on your reference photo. If you can use RGB filters, some subtle shades can be created

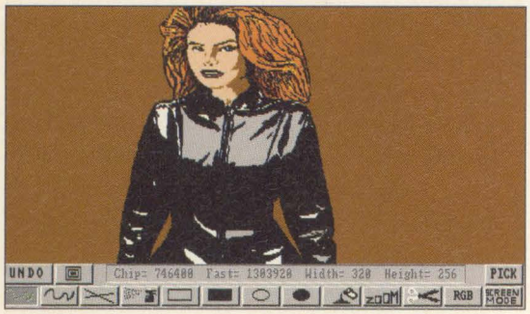


4) Finally fill in the remaining shading freehand with the mouse. Edit the shading areas carefully, and if the face is shiny then add some light highlights

This is the icon bar for *SpectraPaint*, and it's one of the most comprehensive that you'll find on a public domain program. The large green box in the top left is a message box which displays such things as tool in use and memory available

AMOS Paint (Licenceware)

Amiga • Déjà Vu, 25 Park Road, Wigan, Lancashire, WN6 7AA ☎ 0942 495261



***AMOS Paint* is the perfect art package for creating graphics for use in your own *AMOS*-generated games**

Written in *AMOS* for *AMOS* users by Jouni Pollanen, this is a reasonably simple affair, but with several high points to recommend it.

For a start it is able to load and save pictures in the *AMOS* 'SPACKED' format, and this is excellent for creating game screens for use with *AMOS*. On the other hand you can do this kind of trick with a simple program or command from *AMOS*, so you might be better off using *Spectrapaint* and using *AMOS* to SPACK the screens for you.

AMOS Paint is a little bit buggy too, but it's not that bad really, considering it's not been through that many revisions yet.

AMOS 65%

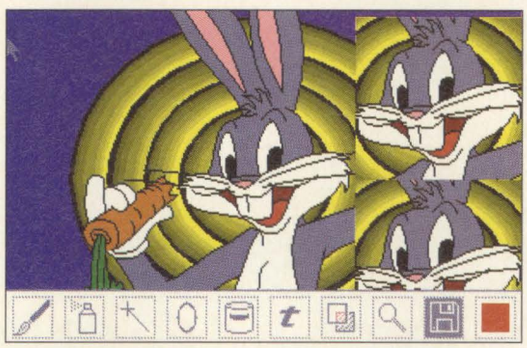
Palette Master (PD)

ST • Jennix PD • 141 • 66 Abbey Road, Strood, Rochester, Kent ME2 3QB

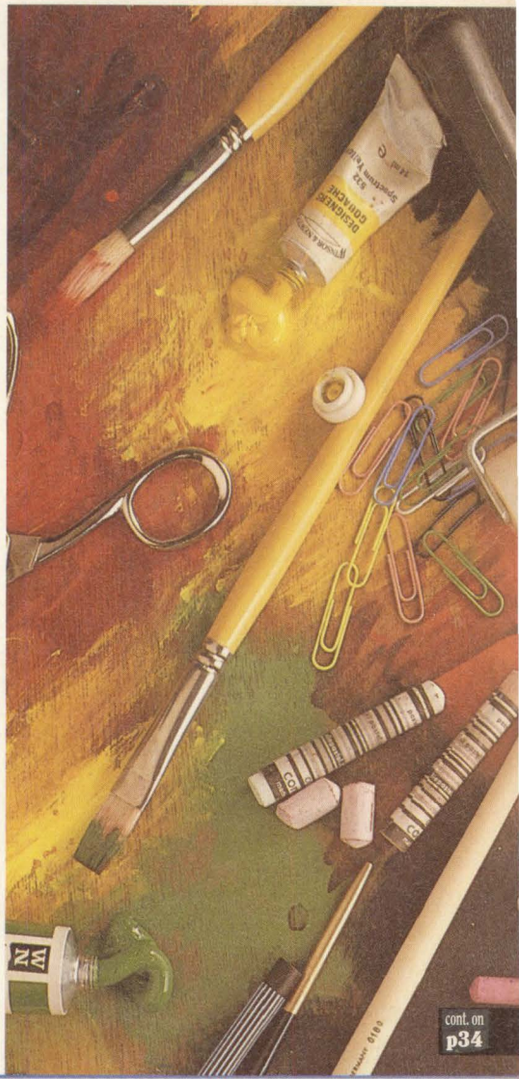
Previously a product of MicroDeal, now out in the public domain. Through a careful programming trick, this program allows you to paint in 512 colours, although in practice the best you can get all on screens at once is in the region of 20-50 colours.

A very simple and user friendly program and one which features the simplest and most accessible toolkit of the lot. A row of icons along the bottom of the screen is all you need to see, and this can be turned off with the right button. Press the right button again and you're sent to the palette selector, where you choose a colour simply by pressing the mouse pointer onto an area on the RGB field on screen.

The field contains every available colour on the



***Palette Master* used to be a commercial product, but now it's out in the public domain and well worth tracking down**



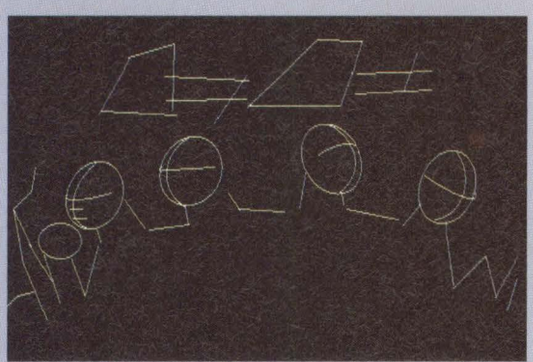
cont. on p34

EZ Art (PD)

St • Floppyshop • Art 42c • 45 Provst Graham Avenue, Hazelhead, Aberdeen AB1 8HB ☎ 0224 312756

A very nice program this one, which using certain clever effects mimics conventional art materials, like pencil, felt pen, crayon, eraser, brush, spraycan and scalpel. All very nice, and, of course, all these effects are the same as other programs, but the nice simple and conventional approach makes it an ideal intermediate program.

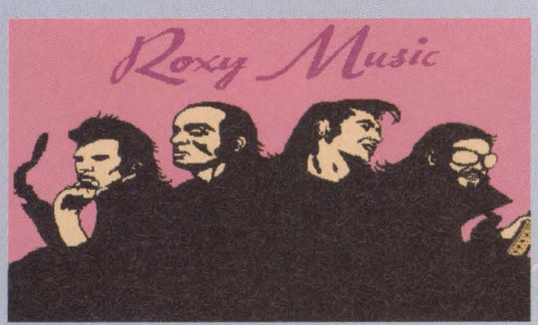
Unlike a lot of the others it comes with some demo pictures to show you what you can achieve with a little determination. The program also loads PI1 and NEO format pictures, and also A4 and A5 size pages!



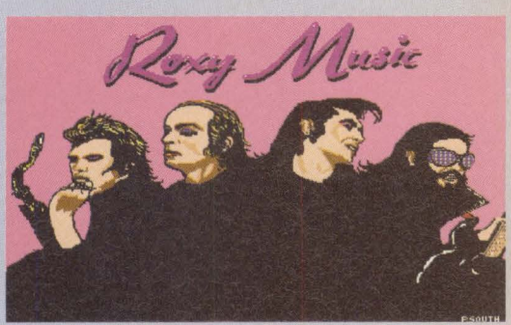
1) First fill in the outlines using circle or ellipse tools, and some straight lines too. Notice the curved lines on the faces showing which way the heads are facing

2) Then sketch in some detail, so you get a better idea of where everything is going to be. Be as messy as you like, because you can always rub out mistakes afterwards

3) Then fill in your sketching with a bold black line, and fill in some areas with black for shading later



4) Fill the white bits with colour using the fill tool (one click in every area you want filled with the selected colour



5) Shade areas (like under a chin) with colours slightly darker than the main skin colour, adjusting the palette to suit

cont. from p33

system, and although you might have to prod around a bit before you get the right colour, you can always find it. Much easier than wibbling about with RGB (Red, Green, Blue) sliders, although there is the option to do that if you want. A good advanced program.

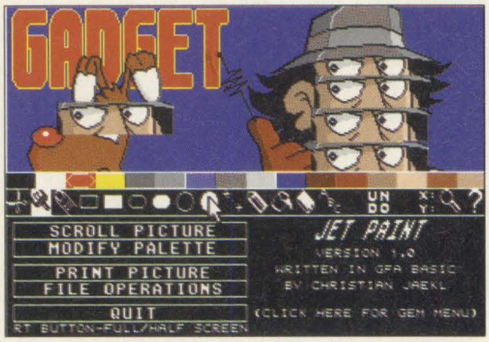
Palette Master 85%

JetPaint (PD)

ST • Caledonia PDL • AG 0036 • 250 Oldtown Road, Hilton, Inverness IV2 4PT ☎ 0463 225736

Written by Christian Jaekl using *GFA Basic*, *JetPaint* saves in *Degas*, NEO and *Art Director* formats. It's rather basic, and if you want to erase a whole screen you have to rub it all out using the eraser tool, which is laborious to say the least.

Nice tools include a finger tool to rub the drawing to smudge certain areas while you draw, a bit like a sort of low-res pastel crayon set! Magnify



You can create some quite startling effects simply and quickly using the cut and paste tools to make a 'brush'. Unfortunately with *JetPaint* simple effects are about all you can achieve

mode is like doing keyhole surgery, and is not for anyone with slightly shaky hands, so lay off the booze before you use this one.

Fairly basic and limited, *JetPaint* is good for beginners, but if you want to turn out more than just doodles, this isn't really the graphics engine you should be looking at.

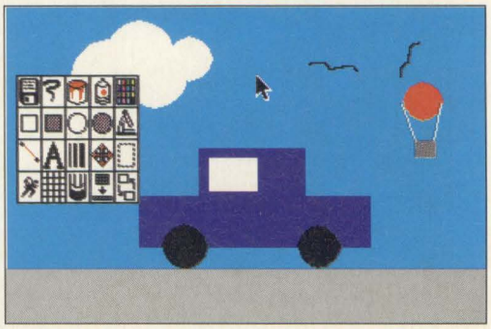
JetPaint 62%

Sprite Studio (PD)

ST • Caledonia • PDL AG 0036 • 250 Oldtown Road, Hilton, Inverness IV2 4PT ☎ 0463 225736

A colourful shareware program, which will cost you a $15 registration fee (under a tenner) and it's not too bad either, so it's well worth doing the decent thing. Once again this is a little basic, and not really the sort of program you want to crunch a lot of graphics on, but OK for beginners or for someone whose graphics needs are not too great.

The menus and tools are on a pop-up window which springs up if you press the right button. Also



***Sprite Studio* has some primitive animation facilities which makes it useful for creating your own sprites**

does sprite animations, so it's a lot better for the creation of full colour sprites than for full screen art, I would say.

Sprite Studio 64%

Deco ST 4.0 (PD)

ST • Floppyshop • Art 65c • 45 Provst Graham Avenue, Hazelhead, Aberdeen AB1 8HB

A fully-featured graphics engine written using *STOS* by a chap called Sid. (So that's what happened to him after he flogged all those Gas shares.)

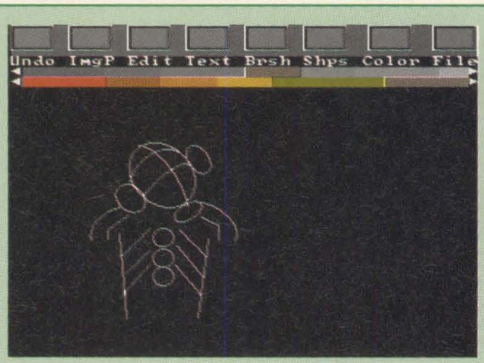
It's a very slick package, and this is in part due to the excellent and already fast routines written in *STOS*

VGACAD (Shareware)

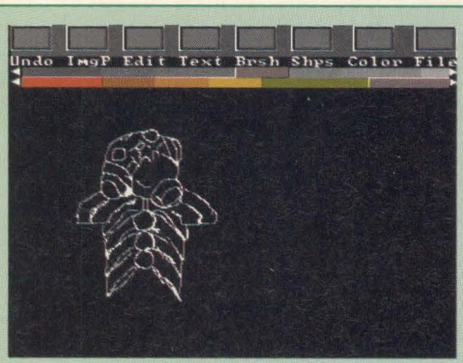
PC • PDSL • 2585 • Winscombe House, Beacon Road, Crowborough, Sussex ☎ 0892 663298

Described as a VGA fully featured paint/draw system. The program runs in 320x200 resolution and as it said in the blurb provides a full range or drawing tools for you to create your graphics. The program is a little more forgiving than *DTPaint 256*, and it doesn't need drivers for cards and mice before it'll do anything, so it's much easier to use for most people.

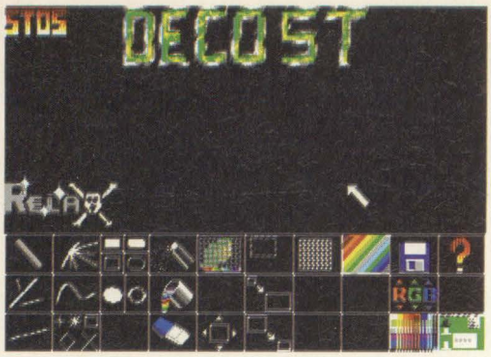
There's a mouse driver emulation on the disk so you can use the program even if you haven't got a mouse.



1) Robots are always fun to draw. First draw the outlines using the circle and line tools. Imagine your robot on the screen and draw the circles and lines around him



2) Next sketch in the shape freehand using the brush tool. Use a colour that will stand out, as you will be able to delete it easily later when you have coloured the picture in



***Deco ST 4.0* looks slick and it's pretty fast too. A good choice for the newcomer to computer painting**

code and then compiled into super-fast machine code. The program is very slickly laid out and the tools all work quickly and simply.

Another ideal package for the beginner which also has something to offer the more experinced computer artist.

Deco ST 71%

DeskTop Paint 256 (Shareware)

PC • PDSL • 2867 • Winscombe House, Beacon Road, Crowborough, Sussex
☎ 0892 663298

This is one of the few Super VGA 256 colour paint programs in the PD, and it's a shame it works with so

The main advatages of *Desktop Paint 256* is that it can import so many different file formats, as with this composite picture

few standard SVGA cards. I couldn't find a single driver on the disk which was compatible with the program on my disk at home, so I had to use a friend's system.

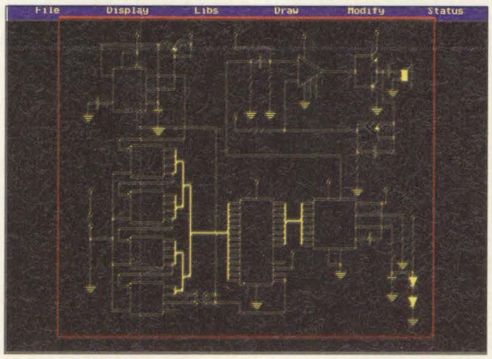
The program is not bad at all, and the real beauty of it is that the program reads and writes a lot of other formats as well as the jolly old 256 colour PCX files you would expect.

DeskTop Paint 58%

EEDraw (PD)

PC • PDSL • 2111 • Winscombe House, Beacon Road, Crowborough, Sussex
☎ 0892 663298

This is described as a 'parametric drawing program' and we'll go into what this might mean in a sec. The

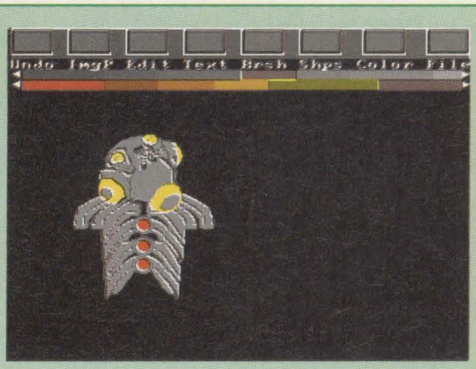


***EEDraw* is definitely for the technically-minded only, and is designed for creating circuit diagrams and the like**

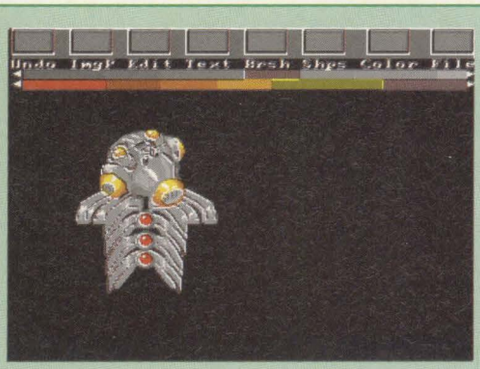
program runs in EGA, VGA and Hercules mono, and comes on two disks which you have to unzip and install onto a hard drive.

The program is basically for drawing circuit diagrams and the like, and outputting the results to a plotter ready for etching into your own circuit boards. *EEDraw* is a very highly technical program, and not for the technophobe or chap who just wants to scribble around.

EEDraw 70%



3) Add some bold filled colours using the flood tool and sketch in some detail freehand. You can lose your guidelines now by selecting the colour and deleing it from your picture



4) Add still more shading and lots of highlights too, as we all know robots are very shiny. By adjusting the palette you can create the effect of shadows and reflection

5) Finally add shadows inside the glass beads on the front, add lots more shading, and duplicate the picture two more times. Now if only they could dance...

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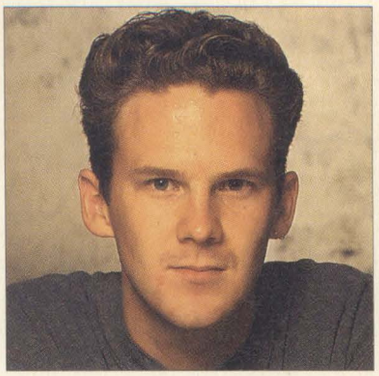
Games



It's a new year and time to get hold of a load of new games to play. Adam Waring takes you through the good, the bad and the ugly. And there's some real corkers this month! Just check out *Commander Keen 4* for the PC, *Ozone* for the ST and *Ladybug* for the Amiga. Gosh, you're a lucky lot...

Reviews Index

Air Ace II (Amiga)	XX
Catchem (PC)	XX
Clacker (ST)	XX
Clear (Amiga)	XX
Commander Keen 4 (PC)	XX
Firts Serve Tennis (ST)	XX
Hotshot Checkers (ST)	XX
Ladybug (Amiga)	XX
Nu (Amiga)	XX
Othello (PC)	XX
Ozone (ST)	XX
Pacman (Amiga)	XX
PC Man (PC)	XX
Raphael's Revenge (Amiga)	XX
Red Alert (ST)	XX
Shooting Gallery (PC)	XX
Super ZZT (PC)	XX
Triple Yahtzee (Amiga)	XX
TSCH (Amiga)	XX

Clear (PD)

Amiga • 1077 • Amiganuts
169 Dale Valley Road, Hollybrook, Southampton SO1 6QX

Clear is a game of matching up tiles. The tiles are laid out on a moveable grid and can be slid around. When tiles of the same type are next to each other you have the opportunity to make them disappear. The more you make vanish at the same time, the more points you score.

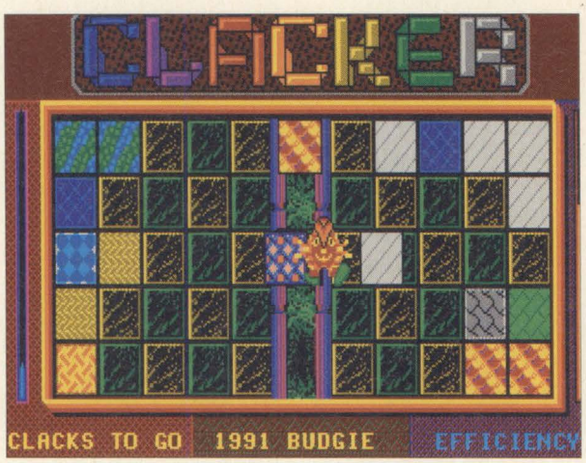
The idea is to get rid of the whole lot. It's not that easy, though. There's a strict time limit and you've got to get rid of the lot before the clock runs out. You're also limited by the number of moves you can make to get rid of all the tiles, selectable by the difficulty level. The easy level enables you to make 50 more moves than the optimum amount to complete the level. This is reduced to 25 on the average level, and drops to just five moves on the most difficult level.

The tiles are moved in whole rows and columns at a time. Clicking on an arrow at the side of the screen shifts the lot. When you have all the tiles you want in a straight line, you can click on them to make them vanish. Clear the lot and you're onto the next level, where everything's the same, just that little bit harder...

As well as the game itself, there's also a level editor on the disk so that if you're no good, you can make all the levels really easy and cheat.

Clear is alright. Its presented well enough. There's not a solitatry squeak out of the speakers, though. And no matter how hard I tried, I'm afraid I didn't find it all that exciting.

AMIGA 75%



Oh no, there's too many of them and I have my hands full at the minute! Quick now, take too long and it's game over

Clacker (Licenceware)

ST • GBU78 • ST Club
9 Sutton Place, 49 Stoney Street, Nottingham, NG1 1LX
☎ 0602 410241

A bit like *Klax*, this one, only it's not. Hmm, perhaps I'd better explain...

There's a pit from which tiles – 'clackers' – appear. You walk round the rim of this pit picking up these clackers as they come to the surface. You can only hold two of these at a time, what with only having two hands.

Trouble is, the longer that there are tiles waiting to be picked up, the more quickly your time limit ticks down. The answer is to stack them at the side of the screen in columns.

This is where the *Klax* bit comes in. Should you stack three of the same type of these tiles in a row, be it horizontally, vertically or diagonally, they will disappear, creating more space for you to drop the tiles into.

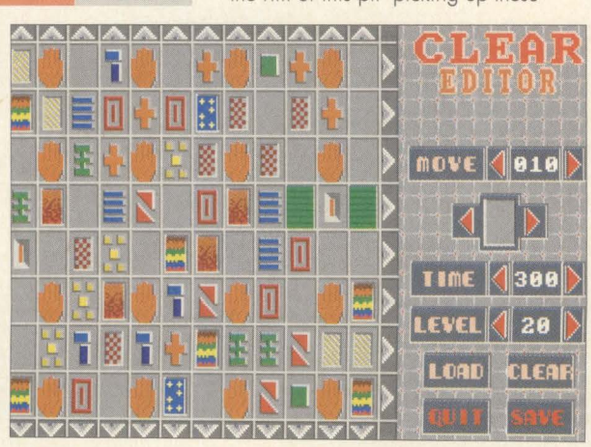
There are a few differences in the way that things work. For a start, there are two lots of places you can dump the tiles, and the tiles just sit there until you pick them up.

You have to get rid of a predetermined number of these clackers and you play against a time limit. It does go on a bit, though. It takes ages before you've cleared enough clackers and progress to the next level.

It's not very clever, either. It's not possible to set up fancy chain reactions, so that one line of three disappearing causes another line to be created and disappear too. And getting four in a row doesn't do you any favours, either. Only three of the tiles disappear.

The control method's pretty convoluted too. Going left or right first changes the direction you're facing and then swaps the side of the pit you're standing on. This can be a bit

Click on the arrows at the edges of the playing area to move whole rows of tiles along. Match them together to make them disappear



Should things get a bit tricky you can enter the level editor and make things a bit easier on yourself. Or make them harder for your friends

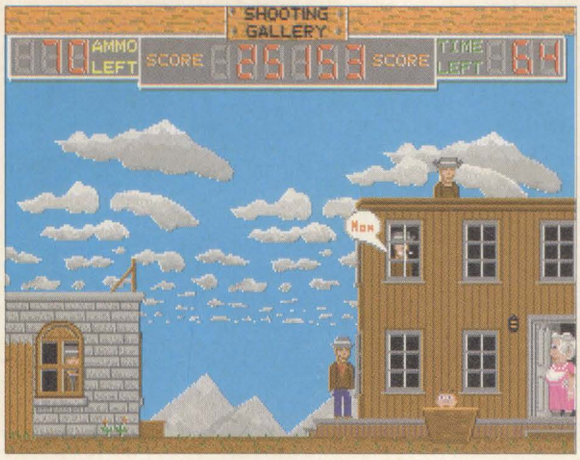
confusing at times and it's only too easy and very annoying to find that you've put the wrong tile in the wrong place (again!)

Clacker is a fiddly little game without much pace. The levels take too long to get through and you just get bored of playing it.

ST 67%

Shooting Gallery (Shareware)

PC • Eigen PD, PO Box 722, Swindon SN2 6YB
☎ 0793 611270



The final screen of *Shooting Gallery* puts you in the Wild West. Pump the bad guys full of lead before they do the same to you

People aren't born power-crazed gun-toting psychopaths. They have to train damned hard. To split open heads you need to be able to eliminate your target quickly and efficiently, before they have the chance to beg for mercy or call the police.

Plenty of practice is the best way, blasting away at tin cans and drop targets 'til your aim is sufficiently good. And that's the aim of *Shooting Gallery*, only you shoot with your mouse, rather than a gun.

There are seven different shooting games to play. They all have one thing in common: you need sharp reactions and a cool head to get anything resembling a high score.

The first level is called *Birds and Bottles* – sounds like the story of my life. In fact it's a fairground-style duck-shoot. It's not just ducks, though; cans, bottles, alarm clocks – in fact all sorts of things glide across the screen all of them ripe to be pierced by a pellet. You have 100 bullets and as many seconds to procure as many points as possible. There's a good assortment of items, and they score different points depending on how difficult they are to hit.

Next it's off to a skeet shoot. Clay pigeons need to be shot down as quickly as possible. The quicker you pot them the higher your score. You only have one shot at each pigeon, though, so you have to make sure your aim is good.

Then it's shooting from the hip. A target has to be hit in the centre of the screen. As soon as the lights turn green, it's ready, aim, fire! Again, speed is of the essence. Your crosshairs start at the bottom of the screen, and you have to position them on the target pretty niftily. The closer your shot is to the middle, the more points you'll make.

The next three levels are a repeat of these, with twists thrown in to make them more difficult. It's not 'til you reach the seventh round, the shoot-out, that the pace hots up a bit.

Set in the Wild West, it's a show-down at the OK Corral. Bad guys in black hats peek through windows, lean through doorways and pop out of barrels. Pump 'em full of lead before they do the same to you, but watch you don't hit the innocent bystanders.

At the end of each round your

cont. on p40

What's fat, yellow and always hungry?

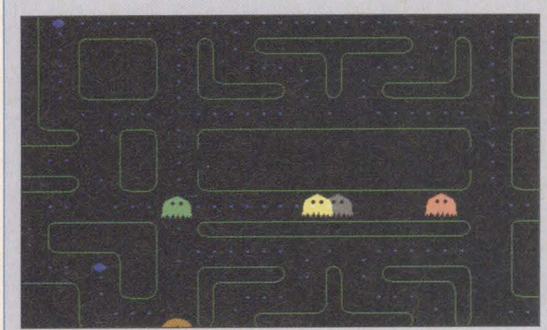
***Pacman* was revolutionary. It broke the mould of arcade gaming. No longer were you restricted to the tired shoot-'em-up formula played only by anorak-wearing youths in dingy arcades. It was bright, colourful and noisy and with oh-so-cute characters that everybody wanted to play (even the girlies).**

Instead of taking place in the outer-reaches of the galaxy, it's played in a haunted maze. You're a greedy fat gobbler who's only aim in life is to eat blobs that litter the spook-filled corridors.

Four ghosts roam around and contact with them spells doom. Your saviours are the four power pills that enables you turn the tables on the freaky fiends and eat them for a change.

PC Man (PD)

PC • Fantasia Shareware
PO Box 1231, Clutton, Bristol
☎ 0761 453716



Ah, this takes me back to when I was a nipper. We had no shoes and had to live in a cardboard box, but at least we had *Pacman*

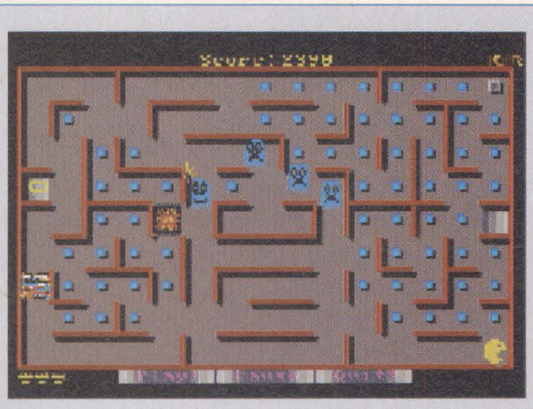
This is a very simplified version of the classic maze game. There's you, the four ghosts (Inky, Pinky, Blinky and the other one) and lots of those dots.

There aren't any bonuses such as yummy fruits to risk life and limb for (not that you have any limbs; you're a round yellow blob).

The game has nine levels, but this really just relates to the speed it runs at. Mind you, on level one you've enough time to go and make a cup of tea between moves, on the highest level it moves like a greased weasel.

It really has very little to offer the modern gamer, but nevertheless has a certain charm. The graphics are OK (you need EGA to play this game), but not startling. There's no sound either, but on the PC, that could be a blessing!

PC 57%



***Pacman 87* has a few new twists to give dot-gobbling a new angle. Watch out for the force-fields that span some corridors**

Pacman 87 (Shareware)

Amiga • AG05 • Byteback
6 Mumbly Close, Newbank, Notts NG24 1JE
☎ 0636 79097

Pacman 87 follows the original quite closely. It misses out on the bonus fruits – worth plenty of points but are they worth the risk? You always seem to get clobbered if you go for it. It does have a couple of twists of its own though.

There are a number of traps that send force-fields across the corridors at random intervals, and you can leave the room to enter another maze – useful for when the action gets a bit too much for our yellow friend. In fact, eating all the dots on a level doesn't complete it – you need to take one of the exits for that. This takes much of the game's fun away as you can leave the slightest hint of trouble.

The graphics are drawn well enough, but certainly don't offer any improvement over the early Atari arcade machine. One thing that is missing is that addictive sound. This game is silent and so won't prove to be the crowd-puller that the original machine was.

AMIGA 62%

cont. from p39

points, scored on a mixture of timing and accuracy, are totted up. You're notified if you've come out top of the table for the section, so you can feel dead chuffed with yourself without having to wait 'til you get to the end of the game.

At the end all your scores are totalled and you're invited, if you did well enough, to enter your name into the high score table. If you want to sharpen your shooting skills at one particular section then you can play it over and over again with the practice option. Cheat!

Shooting Gallery is a fairly simple game, but what fun! It's best to play with a group of chums, battling it out for high score stakes. Graphics work well, sound is reasonable and it's very playable. Pretty much 'on target', then.

PC **78%**

Nu (PD)

Amiga • 2030 • Virus Free PD
23 Elborough Road, Moredon, Swindon, Wilts SN2 2LS

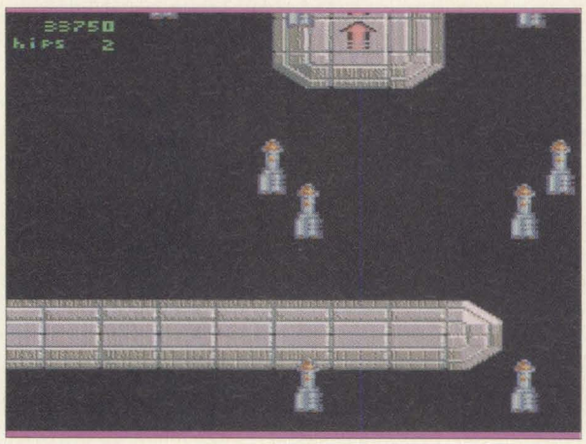
It's time for a blast again, folks. Yep, it's another shoot-'em-up. One of millions available in the public domain. Are the aliens mean enough? Is your ship hard enough? Have you had enough Shredded Wheat?

Collision with the metallic-looking background is deadly, as is with any of the sprites that infest the screen. Luckily the aliens haven't invented gunpowder yet, so they don't shoot at you. Then again, your weaponry isn't exactly mega-powerful either; it takes several shots to kill even the weediest of the opposition.

It's a memory game more than anything. The gameplay consists, for the most part, of dodging the rapidly-moving craft and trying to remember where to be at the right time. The baddies simply move too quickly to be able to shoot 'em to bits in time. Your guns will rapid-fire if you hold the button down, so it's worth pumping as many bullets into them as possible; just don't come to rely on them, that's all.

It's very nice looking. Everything has a futuristic metallic sheen to it, but there simply isn't enough gameplay to keep you at it for too long.

AMIGA **62%**



There's loads of baddies to contend with in *Nu*, maybe too many going too quickly; it's more of a game of dodge than a shoot-'em-up

Commander Keen 4 (Shareware)

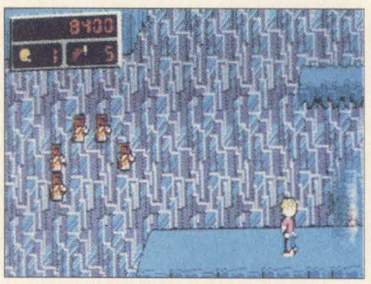
PC • PSA
10 High Street, Tadlow, Royston, Herts SG8 0ES
☎ 0767 23302

He's back! No not Arnie in *Terminator 4*, but everybody's favourite pre-pubescent hero, Commander Keen.

The plot goes something like this: the guardians of the galaxy (the dudes who keep it a nice, safe, happy place) have all been captured and are being held prisoner on a distant planet, far, far away. Inexplicably, the only person who can save the entire Universe is a 12-year old known only as Commander Keen. (It probably has something to do with him being a child genius and not getting along with his friends.)

There's not a moment to lose! (Well, maybe a quick few laps on the Scalectrix first.) Keen sets off, decked out in a pair of 501s, some red Converse baseball boots and an American Football helmet. Oh well, he *almost* looks cool.

Landing on the distant planet,



Yo, dude! Ice-cool Commander Keen makes his way through one the many arcade sections in the game. Hurry Kid, there's a galaxy to save

Keen surveys the alien landscape. Hmm, looks pretty much like Earth really, with lots of trees, lakes and mountains. Quite pleasant really. Still, this is no time for admiring the scenery. There's a job to be done!

This is a new set of *Commander Keen* games, following from the original series released some time ago. It works in the same way: you get the first game of a series of three as shareware. Send off the registration fee an you'll get the other two sections.

The game is split roughly into two

And now for something completely useless...

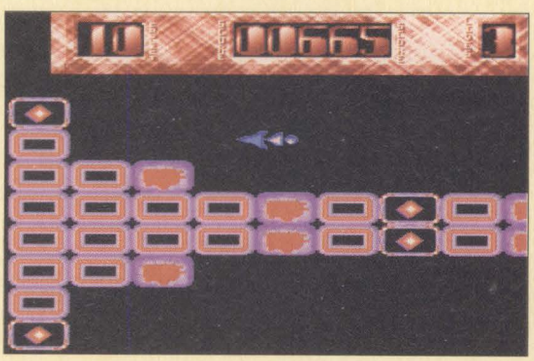
The standards of public domain software can vary wildly. Sometimes games are merely average. Sometimes they are astoundingly good, it seems amazing that they can possibly be for free! But sometimes they are so bad that it's equally astounding! Not that it's badly programmed or a bad version of a game, but because the idea behind them is so terrible that it's quite inconceivable how anybody came up with the idea in the first place.

They're like those low-budget 50s sci-fi movies where they're so naff in every respect that they're instant classics...!

TSCH (Shareware)

Amiga • 17 Bit Software
PO Box 97, Wakefield, WF1 1XX ☎ 0924 366982

Tsch. Strange name for a strange game. There's no point in going into the plot because there isn't one. You control a pointy thing and move through a scrolling level full of blocky things. You're supposed to crash into certain types of blocks and avoid others as the screen moves along.



Pilot the ship into the blocks with diamonds inside rather than the ones without. What a hopeless idea for a game!

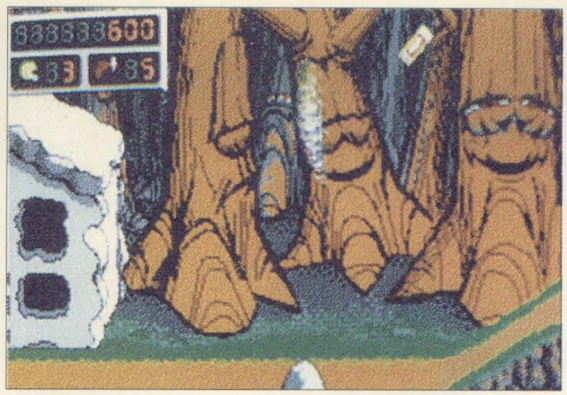
You have no control over the speed of the scrolling – that's preset at the beginning of each level. All you can do is move up and down, hoping to either crash into or avoid the right things. The problem is that it's either too fast to have any choice in the matter, or so slow it's mind-crushingly dull.

On loading things actually look quite promising. The intro is impressive and there's lots of atmospheric music. It looks more like the beginning of a demo than a game. In fact, the game itself moves quite slickly and seems fairly competently programmed. It's only when you start to play that you realise what a sad game it really is.

The biggest shock is that *Tsch* is sold as shareware! Not prepared merely to inflict this on an unsuspecting public, the author wants paying for his efforts. He's either mad or a genius! Give that man a fiver!

AMIGA **22%**

You make your way between the arcade sections by roaming around on the planet's surface. This means you have several areas to play



Those trees look a bit spooky! You can make extra high leaps with a combination of jumping and using your trusty pogo stick

halves; a viewed-from-above section where you wander around the planet's surface to different locations and a side-on arcade game where the actual action takes place. This is similar to the way the originals work... but this is streets ahead of its predecessors!

The game simply oozes glossiness, making it look like a professional game. Even the title sequence is impressive, with massive letters of the the game's title scrolling in onto the screen in opposite directions. They look like they belong to a big-budget sci-fi movie like *Terminator*, rather than a shareware game.

The instructions are clear and friendly. They are presented with graphics from the game to explain what items relate to what, rather than having to read through some tortuous 'read me' file.

And the game itself? It's impressive graphically, technically and in terms of playability. It opens up with CK standing next to his spacecraft. He runs around under the control of the cursor keys. But you won't get very far – his path is blocked by a village slightly above the place he starts from. To get past it you have to enter one of the many arcade sections of the game.

Control here switches to a side-on view. Now you can move left and right only, but you have a few tricks you can perform. You can look up or down to see parts of the screen currently out of your view, which scrolls to follow your actions. You can shinny up and slide down poles which take you to other platforms. There are plenty of pick-'em-ups that float in the sky, and you can jump up to grab these. For particularly hard-to-get goodies, you can whip out your pogo stick for spectacularly high leaps. Control over the stick isn't that easy, though! There are tons of nasties that threaten your progress and these can be dispersed with a quick blast from your laser gun. Careful though, not all baddies can be killed this way; some are invulnerable!

The graphics are superb. Keen is well animated, the creatures *look* cute and cuddly. Shoot a nasty and it remains there with stars spinning around its head. There's some truly superb animation. Leap for a ledge that's a little too high and you can make a grab for it, pulling yourself up on to firm ground. This is reminiscent of commercial games such as the classic *Prince of Persia*.

The scrolling is smooth as silk and fast with it.

The earlier puzzles are like a training ground, but will soon be solved. The later ones are extremely tricky. Once you've entered the only way out is to solve the domain you've entered, or die trying. You'll have to become extremely dexterous, learning to use combinations of using your pogo stick, jumping and grabbing at seemingly impossible levels to get to new places. This can be extremely tricky!

Part of the beauty of the game is that if a particular section stumps you, then you can always try another, by walking into one of the other buildings, and come back to the other one when you're fresh to it.

You can save the game at any point. If you're wise you'll save when you complete each of the arcade sections. By saving your progress in this way, there's none of this annoying getting killed when you've got so far. In fact you'll never have to replay those early screens again!

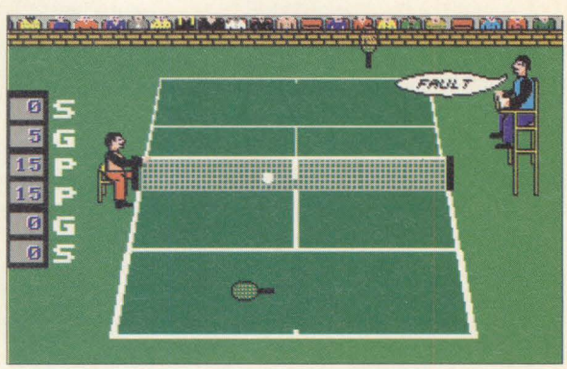
What a game! There's just so much to it! Great graphics and gameplay, with more polish than a can of pledge with 20 per cent extra free. And should you complete the game then there's another two sections to go (provided you pay the shareware registration fee, of course!)

PC **96%**

First Serve Tennis (PD)

ST • MG 23 • Merton PD, 10 Grasmere Avenue, London SW19 3DX

Anyone for tennis? Ah, it's raining and you haven't got a tennis racquet and don't know anyone who plays and besides you're not much good anyway. Never mind, you can play in the comfort of your own living room (or kitchen or bedroom or wherever your ST is located) thanks to *First Serve*, a tennis game written with *STOS*.



Too right matey! The biggest fault with *First Serve* is that it's little more than the stone-age *Pong* with tarted up graphics

It's you against the computer – there's no two-player option. The rules of the real game are followed – after a fashion. It starts with you serving. The ball flips up, and you have to strike it at the right moment for to achieve the best possible serve.

You are represented by a disembodied bat which you move around the court with the mouse. This means that you can position it rapidly anywhere you like on the court, without having to worry about getting

cont. on p42

Catchem (Shareware)

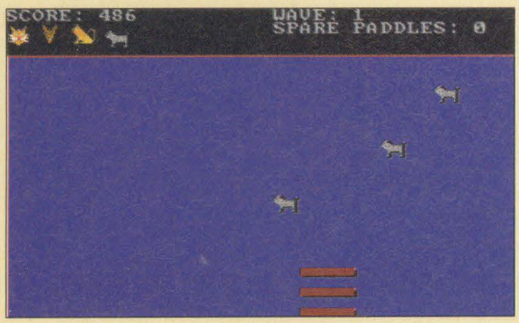
PC • Gam 81 • Fantasia
PO Box 1231, Clutton, Bristol
0761 453716

It's raining cats and dogs, and it's your job to catch them before they make a sticky mess on the floor. You have a sort of bucket-type device that you move around at the bottom of the screen with the aid of the mouse.

The household pets fall from the heavens. You have to position the scoop so they land safely, making a horrible chirp like a strangled budgie as they do so. Should you miss then you lose one of your three lives. Complete four levels of this and you're through to the next stage, with even sillier things plummeting to the ground. Furniture now, whatever next...?

Lose three lives and it's game over, man. Thank goodness for that – *Catchem* is truly dreadful! It's completely pointless, very stupid and totally dull. What a waste of time! Buy it!

PC **13%**



Catch me if you can! Catch all the cats before they hit the ground in a pool of blood and guts. Interesting idea, chaps...

cont. from p41

a little man to run to the right place or anything like that.

Hitting the ball depends on having the bat in the right place at the right time. You can strike to the right or left depending on which mouse button you hold down. I'm not convinced about the physical laws that the ball seems to follow – it can sometimes change course mid-way through a bout.

An umpire rules whether the ball is out or whether there's a fault (though he does seem to get confused sometimes – lucky thing John McEnroe's not playing!) But it really is very basic indeed, especially the graphics. It offers little more than those early versions of *Pong*, seen on many Binatone-powered TV sets in the Christmas of 1979.

ST **37%**

Look out behind you! It's an inter-ballistic missile with triple nuclear warheads! Best shoot them down with your defense systems, then

Red Alert (PD)

ST • MG28 • Merton PD, 10 Grasmere Avenue, London SW19 3DX

Incoming! Incoming! There's a nuclear war in the offing, and you're the first line of defence. It's a real Star Wars scenario, with atomic missiles raining down on your cities. You have an arsenal of laser beams and anti-missile missiles with which to down the 20-megaton projectiles.

There are two continents you can chose to defend: the USA or Europe. This is done by loading one of two different games on the disk rather than by selecting it from within the game itself. The only difference, though, is that a different map is displayed; the gameplay is identical.

You have 10 cities, five missile silos and five laser sites. you can plonk these down wherever you like – even in the sea. You're given a little warning and then the holocaust begins. Pick off the rockets as they make their way city-wards. Just position the cursor over the incoming missile and press the mouse buttons to let your missiles fly. They're all aimed at strategic targets, so it's important that you destroy as many of them as you possibly can.

The attack is unrelenting. As soon as one wave of missiles is over then another takes its place. It's only a matter of time before Armageddon. Good thing we're doing the same to the evil Red Menace too, eh?

If it sounds a little like *Missile Command*, then you're right, it is. It's just been turned on its side, sort of, and it does lose something in the translation. It's not quite as fast and frantic as the game it resembles. It has better graphics – the maps are realistic-looking. But it's simply not as playable. That's not to say it's terrible, and should you hear the four-minute warning, whiling away your final moments with a bit of thermo-nuclear warfare isn't a bad way to spend your last moments on Earth.

ST **64%**

Ladybug (PD)

Amiga • Slave PD
4a Luffmen Road, Lee, London SE12 9SX ☎ 081-851 8082

Let's face it: nature's pretty disgusting. Especially when it comes to the insect

Thinking man's game

The problem with strategy board games is that you need more than one player willing to give it a go at any one time. This is especially true with unpopular people. Luckily your plastic-pal-that's-fun-to-be-with can take the role of player two. They're on hand at any time you want to play, won't cheat, and if they're a bit too clever for your liking it's simply a matter of clicking down the difficulty level a notch or two.

Hotshot Checkers (PD)

ST • GP002 • PD.ST
95 Elton Road, Sandbach, Cheshire CW11 9NF

'Checkers' is the slang American term for the very English game of Draughts. (Actually it's Chinese, but there you go.) *Hotshot Checkers* reckons it's pretty darned good. Huh, we'll soon see about that!

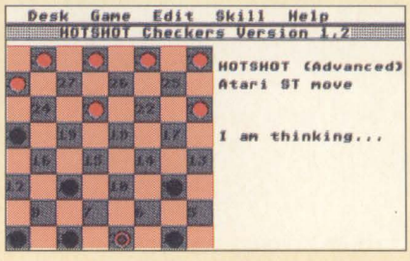
The screen display uses the the ST's Gem windowing system, and so though it's compatible with the Atari desktop, it doesn't look too hot. The whole display is in red, white and black and various stipple combinations thereof. The board is numbered but these have no effect during the game. It's a case of clicking on a piece and dragging it to it's new position. Multiple jumps are handled in steps; if you're able to take a second piece then you given the option to do so.

It follows the 'grown-up' rules. That is, you have to take pieces if you're able to, so avoiding stalemate situations. There are oodles of options available, including five difficulty levels which determine how far ahead the program looks for its moves.

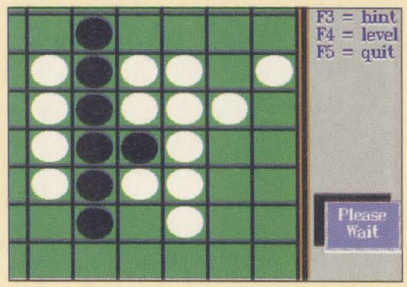
But how well does the thing play? Naturally enough, the true test is on its highest level – Hotshot. And (ahem) it plays rather well, irritatingly enough. It managed to beat me. Well, I wasn't concentrating that hard. (Yes, that's what it'll be.)

If you're looking for pretty graphics then look elsewhere. But if it's a damn good game of draughts you're after, then you could have found the perfect partner.

ST **75%**



Damn! He's got a king already, it's not fair. I think I'll accidentally hit the reset switch and start again...



There's a lot of strategy in *Othello*. Something the computer doesn't seem to have grasped

Othello (PD)

PC • Fantasia Shareware, PO Box 1231, Clutton, Bristol 0761 453716

Othello is a game based on capturing territory. This is played on an eight-by-eight board. Players take turns to plonk down their pieces. The idea is to trap your opponent's pieces in straight lines between the newly placed piece and ones that have already been placed. Any pieces caught in such a way are 'flipped' over and chance to your colour.

The winner is the person who has the most pieces of their colour on the board when there are no places left to go. A beginner's strategy is usually to capture as many pieces as they can with every move, but this is not the way to win: getting a good position is far more important in the early stages of the game.

Which is a lesson that *Othello* could do with learning. Its strategy is hopeless, and it's very easy to beat even on the most difficult level. It also takes a long period of time to make its poorly chosen moves.

Othello is not a good implementation of the board game it takes its name from. Despite the rather pleasing front-end, far more work needs to be done both with the way it plays and with its response time.

PC **39%**

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cont. from p42

kingdom. They've got too many mandibles, too many antennae and too many legs for my liking. In fact, creepy crawlies are universally despised apart from one creature: the peaceful ladybird.

Atomically it's like any other beetle. But because it's bright red and has pretty black spots it isn't treated with the repulsion that other flying six-legged beasties suffer. That's probably why the star of *Ladybug* is such a creature, rather than a cockroach or a silverfish.

The baddies take on those roles. 'Orrible, nasty, yukky things with googly eyes and revolting dinner-time habits. And what should be on the menu? Double egg, beans and chips? No. A cheese and mushroom omelette? Not that, either. I'm afraid it's you that's the main course.

So how do you avoid this disgusting fate? Well it's obvious! By gobbling all the dots, of course, so that you can get to the next level. It's played a little like *Pacman*. The nasties chase you around a maze full of edible dots. You have to avoid their best efforts to gobble you up. You have one distinct advantage over the maraudering meanies – many of the walls are, in fact, swing gates. Go through one and it swivels round changing the layout of the maze (and preventing them from getting you – hah!)

You have a wee bit of a head start. A timer bar ticks round the circumference of the maze and you have the time it takes to make a complete circuit before they're hot on your tail (yes, I know ladybirds don't have tails, it's just a manner of... oh, never mind.)

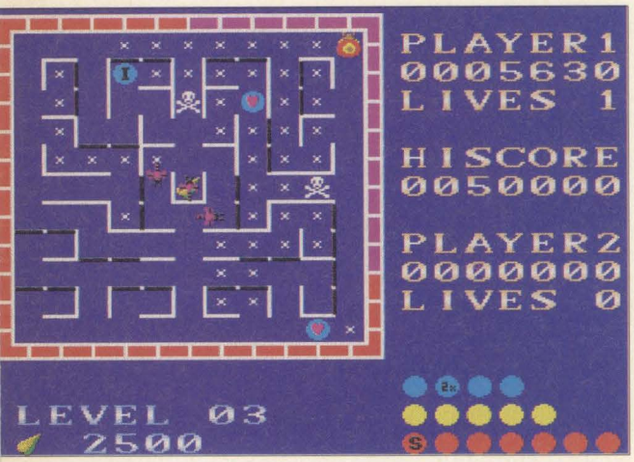
There are some pick-up type things that give you extra points and some nasty skull and crossbones that spell instant doom. You'd be far better steering clear, then.

The graphics are fairly simple, but nice to look at. Actually, some of the nasties look as cute as you do, but still, it's best not to go up and stroke them. There are no sound fx in the game but a tune plays continuously. It's a fairly crap rendition of New Order's *Blue Monday*. Oh well, even the best beats can be spoiled. Never mind though, there's always the volume control...

There's an annoying 'bug' in the game, and I don't mean one of the spiders. This only happens (apparently) on the A500 machines. There's an annoyingly long wait every time you die, but promises have been made to remove this in later releases.

Ladybug offers simple arcade fun. But the fun's there all the same and you'll be making regular reloads of this game. Goody.

AMIGA 85%



Run away! There's lots of nasty horrible little bugs that want to eat you all up. *Ladybug* is good old-fashioned maze-roaming fun

Air Ace II (PD)

Amiga • Slave PD
4a Luffmen Road, Lee, London SE12 9SX ☎ 081-851 8082

Chocks away Ginger! We're off on another mission against the Hun, and we'll almost certainly be coming in mahogany boxes. Tally ho!

You're at the controls of a World War I biplane and your job is to make inroads into enemy territory. Presumably it's Germany you're attacking, judging by the sinister black crosses painted on the enemy aircraft.

It's pretty much a suicide mission: just you against the whole of the Luftwaffe. But you're made of stern

Here they come, but the Krauts don't stand a chance against the guns of the RAF. Here's a message for Adolf, scum!

Trapped in a dimension where they certainly aren't Ozone friendly

Ozone (Shareware)

ST • GD1425 • Goodman Enterprises
16 Conrad Close, Meir Hay Estate, Longton, Stoke-on-Trent ST3 1SW ☎ 0782 335650

Looking cute ain't no guarantee of an easy passage through life. You may look cuddly, fluffy and hugable, but to the nasties that also live in the world of *Ozone*, you're about as appealing as a My Little Pony (Blossom, the one with the green hair and stars on it's bum.)

It's a fairly simple brief that you have: make your way through the level and find the doorway that leads through to the next section. Your cute-looking blob will need to avoid lots of other cute-looking blobs on the way, who would rather see you dead. The rotters!

The game is played in a vertically-scrolling playing area. You generally start at the bottom and have to make you way upwards by the way of platforms that lead to the doorway. Or they do sometimes. Often plenty of tricks and traps need to be overcome before your path is clear, not to mention the baddies that have to be hopped over, avoided or shot.

There are a lot of tempting buttons to press and levers to pull, but beware – the result isn't always to your benefit. Sometimes a button will yield an extra platform or a bonus pick-'em-up, but other times you'll get a shower of meteors or a load more nasties to contend with!

Hi guys! Guys? Hey, look, there's no need for violence... In *Ozone* it's you against the big, bad World. Pity you've run out of bullets and can't protect yourself

Normally your actions are restricted to running left and right, and jumping. But pick up a bonus type thingy, and you'll have a trick up your sleeve to help you out in that moment of need. Most of them allow you to access particularly difficult areas. For instance a rocket pack will boost you upwards, opening a parachute at the peak of your ascent, where a you can steer yourself to land gently on another platform. A hang glider gets you cross large chasms, by horizontally gliding across the gap.

The levels get progressively more difficult as you go on. The first one is a piece of black forest gateux, but some of the later ones need a good mixture of arcade ability and puzzling before you'll make it through.

Graphics are pretty swanky. The backdrops are extremely well-drawn and the characters all look cute as cute can be, with loads of miniature changing expressions on their lovable little faces. Ahhh! (I think I'm going to be sick.)

There are tons of nice touches. The extra bits of kit that our hero can use are brilliant and all have their own animated sequences. *Ozone* is

Another one bites the dust. Hurrah. Oh, hold on a minute, where have we gone? Oh no, we must be the one's who've just gone up in smoke

shoot-'em-up but with old aeroplanes taking the place of alien death machines. It's tricky, though. Enemy fire is difficult to dodge as your plane moves fairly sluggishly. Your return fire isn't as rapid as it could be either.

Graphics are gurt-lush; the smooth-scrolling backdrop depicts the war-torn landscape. The biplanes look good too, and everything works well together.

Sound is limited to machine-gun noises and explosions. If there's a lot of artillery flying around it sounds like a typing pool on overtime with the click-click-clack of the ancient automatic fire.

It's a good-looker and smooth with it. It's a bit lacking in excitement department, though, and could of done with a bit more fine-tuning in the gameplay department.

AMIGA 79%

stuff; those are RAF insignias painted on your wings.

The evil Nazi menace is unrelenting in its attacks, but pretty stupid. The skill of the Hun pilots is indicated by the colour of their plane. Grey planes just fly straight down the screen firing as they go. Red and grey planes do loops and are rather more dangerous. Completely red planes are the worst of the lot. It must be the old Red Baron.

Air Ace II is a fairly standard

Triple Yahtzee (Shareware)

Amiga • 2067 • Virus Free PD
23 Elborough Road, Moredon, Swindon, Wilts SN2 2LS

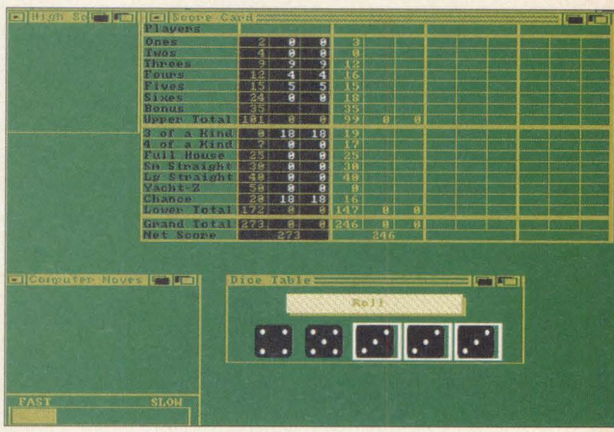
Bet you thought that dice were pretty boring unless you have a game of *Monopoly* to go with them. Ha! That's where you're wrong! Get five of the things together and you can play *Yahtzee* – a bit like poker only played with dice instead of cards.

It works like this: you roll all five dice and are then allowed up to two subsequent re-rolls where you can keep back any of the dice you're happy with. You have a score sheet where you aim to get certain combinations of score; four of a kind, as many twos as you can, a run of all five dice and the ultimate score of a Yahtzee.

With every roll you have to knock something off the score card, so if you've got a really crap score and only the space to score a Yahtzee left, then it's a case of rubbery cheddar to you matey boy.

But if you haven't got any dice or a pen or a piece of paper then you can use your Amiga to play on. This game enables up to six human players – there's no computer option as far as I can make out.

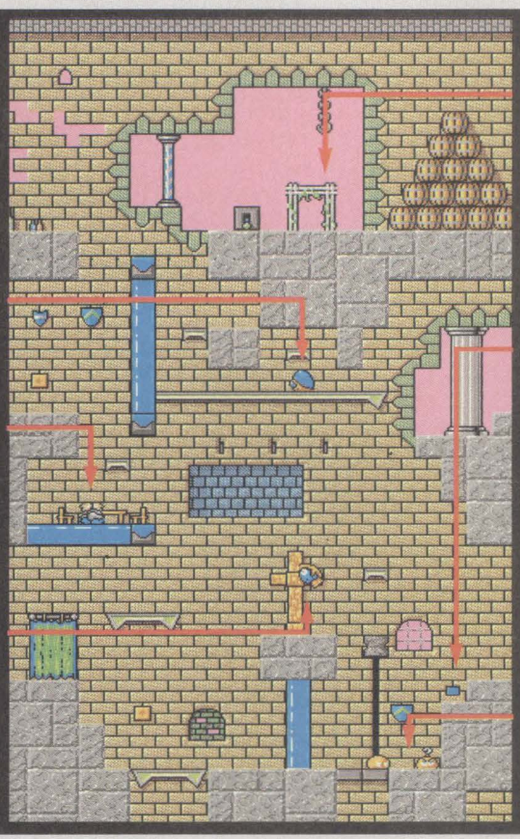
Unfortunately the Amiga's hi-res interlaced mode is used which will


High Sc
Score Card
Players
Ones 2 0 0 3
Twos 4 0 0 8
Threes 3 9 0 12
Fours 12 4 4 16
Fives 15 5 5 15
Sixes 24 0 0 18
Bonus 35 35
Upper Total 135 0 0 99 0 0
3 of a Kind 0 18 18 19
4 of a Kind 0 0 0 17
Full House 25 0 0 25
Sm Straight 30 0 0 30
Lg Straight 40 0 0 40
Yacht 0 0 0 0
Chance 28 18 18 16
Lower Total 173 0 0 147 0 0
Grand Total 273 0 0 246 0 0
Net Score 273 246
Computer Moves
Dice Table
Roll
FAST
SLOW

Try you luck with *Triple Yahtzee*, a dice game that has a good combination of strategy and chance

leave you with eyes like hubcaps unless you have an expensive flicker-fixer card. A pity as the screen is pretty bland and empty and doesn't need the luxury of such a high resolution display. This has other drawbacks. The

cont. on p46



This is one tough customer. He's fatal and your bullets are ineffective against him. You'll have to use cunning to get past him instead

These chaps sap your energy, but they can be easily dispersed of by a quick blast with your shooter

Here you are! You can jump around like a thing on a spring. A pretty boy, aren't you?

This is your exit to the next level. But before you go through you'll need to pull the lever to make the doorway appear

Pressing this button causes the block to the left to fall, crushing anything beneath it

These cute little creatures will do you no harm. But you can kill them for the fun of it with the falling block

I can fly! There are several bonus items that enable you to perform extra-ordinary feats. The hang glider enables you to fly to far-away platforms thet you couldn't normally reach. It usually leads to extra goodies

one of the most professional-looking games around that's available as shareware. It could very easily pass as a commercial product based on it's extremely impressive presentation, and it has plenty to offer in the playability stakes to recommend it too.

The levels hold plenty of challenge and it's difficult to find fault with the game. You're in for hours of fun – guaranteed!

ST 94%

cont. from p44

area that you have to click in is so small that it's easy to miss the box you want to click in. When you've got your high-scoring set of sixes and you accidently click in the 'fives' box next to it and score zero instead of 24 then it's pretty annoying.

Surely there must be some advantages? Yes. The computer automatically tots up the scores for all the relevant sections so you can see what you'll score at a glance. Useful for those who can't add up or can't be bothered too.

It's still fun, but that's because *Yahtzee*'s a fun game, rather than it being a particularly well executed implementation. The other thing is that you can't kiss the dice for good luck – if you did you might get a rather nasty static shock!

AMIGA 64%

Raphael's Revenge (PD)

Amiga • PD Soft
1 Bryant Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS1 2YD
☎ 0702 466933

Those heroes in a half-shell may have been last year's fashion, but *Turtles* fans can play their favourite once again (as long as their favourite's Raphael – the distinctive looking one with the red bandanna).

Raphael's Revenge has been created on the *Shoot-'Em-Up Construction Kit*, so it's surprising then that you're not at the controls of some 'Turtle Space Fighter' fighting against aliens from the fourth dimension. Instead it's a more down to earth plot, with our green chum must do battle against the sinister Foot Clan on the streets (and, indeed beneath the streets in the sewers) of New York.

The first few screens are static, with the masked meanies attacking from the sides. You have those three-pronged knife thingies which you can hurl at them. The enemy is armed with laser blasters. Hmm, I know which I'd rather have...

In the later screens you have to take on Shredder's more powerful minions, Rocksteady and Bebop (at least I think it's them – the graphics are none too clear). Then there's a vertically-scrolling bit where once again you have to deal with the dreaded Foot Clan.

It plays quite well. The graphics are pretty sad, but there are some nice touches such as whenyou get reduced to a miniature-sized turtle when you get killed. (Actually, it's probably a real-sized turtle but you tend to lose your sense of scale when dealing with these mutant-types.)

But it doesn't really have that much longevity. It's quite difficult and sometimes it can be impossible to dodge the enemy fire which is annoying as no amount of skill can save your shell.

AMIGA 54%

The graphics may not be state of the art (by even the most lenient standards), but *Super ZZT* is deep and very involving

You're that little face-shaped blob. Below you is a key. But to get it you'll have to cross the quickly-moving conveyor belt

Super ZZT (Shareware)

PC • Nildram Software, 26 Stanley Hill Avenue, Amersham, Bucks HP7 9BD.
☎ 0494 729236

For reasons that aren't quite clear, you've been thrown into the deepest dungeon around. To get out you'll need to fight your way through loads of horrid monsters and make your way through tons of trick and trap-infested levels. What an absolute bummer!

First impressions, graphically at least, are of a pretty dull-looking program. You have a choice of colour or mono graphics (it will work on any monitor), but everything's made up from the PC's character set. You're a little smiley face type of blob, while the monsters look like the greek letter or upside-down question marks. The walls are made from blocks. Hardly inspiring!

A status panel to the right tells you how well you're doing

Still, the proof is in the playing. Movement is by way of mouse or cursor keys. Unfortunately the game uses the PC's standard built-in keyboard routines to check the keyboard; this means that there is a pause before the keys start to repeat. Consequentially the character's movement is rather juddery. Not at all ideal for an arcade game. The levels are pretty big, much bigger than the screen size and the game scrolls as you reach the edge. There're plenty of meanies to overcome, but there's lots of help too, especially early on in the game. Scrolls (strange-looking characters that resemble a Mexican doing weight training) offer advice about what to do next while 'ä' characters give you extra ammo.

There's a lot of humour in the game; talking trees, a mad zoo keeper and creatures whose favourite food is bananas, but you're a close second. The puzzles are tricky too, but not so much they take hours to solve, most can be cracked in a matter of minutes. But the levels are big enough to keep a lot of longevity.

I've got mixed feelings as far as rating the game goes. On the one hand, it has dismally old-fashioned graphics that are well out-of-date and an archaic control system that with a little work could be improved no end. On the other hand, it's a great little game with skip-fulls of scope. Buy it, but don't expect it to be state of the art stuff.

PC 73%

Oh no, it's the attack of the badly-drawn Ninjas. This vertically-scrolling section hasmembers of the nasty Foot Clan coming from all sides

Flipping Henry! They're all over the place. But dispose of these guys and there's that tasty-looking pizza just begging to be eaten

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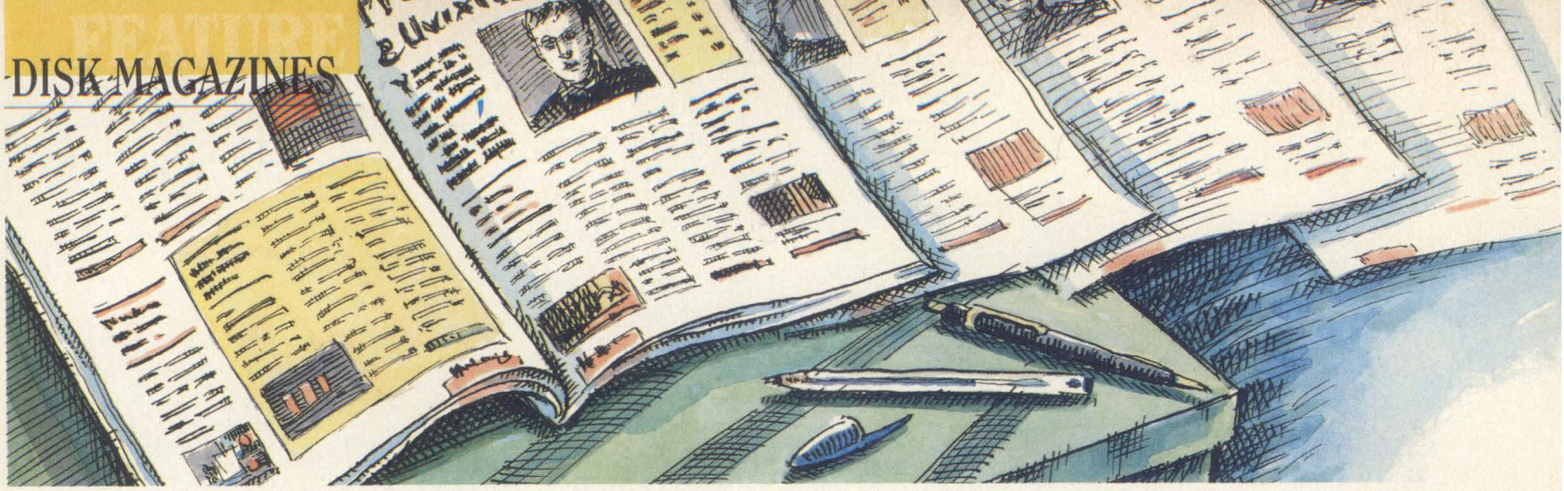


Hot off the disk drive

The paperless office may still firmly be the stuff of science fiction, but paperless magazines are well and truly with us already. They're cheap, they're interactive and they're in the public domain. Nial Grimes browses through the electronic answer to fanzines...

When you open up a magazine you don't usually expect to be greeted by a burst of music. You'd be even less likely to anticipate a contents page which enables you to go directly to the article of your choice at the press of a button. You'd also be extremely lucky to find moving pictures, interactive features and computer games that you can play and programs that you can run imbedded into the pages of traditional paper-based journals. But it's all pretty much standard stuff for disk magazines.

A disk magazine, or 'diskzine', takes the concept of a paper-based magazine one step further by offering articles, features and reviews in an interactive environment with sound effects and music to accompany the text. Some diskzines take an almost multimedia-style approach including animation to illustrate articles. Most diskzines also offer PD software as well.

The benefits are obvious: not only does it cut out the need for expensive printing and duplication equipment but also, because of the low outlay, you will find articles in diskzines covering topics that would never warrant publication in a printed magazine. Basically, diskzines are the logical ultimate incarnation of fanzines for computer enthusiasts. If you're seriously into computers, what better way to learn all the latest news, and all the latest trivia, than by loading up a disk?

Humble beginnings

The concept of enthusiasts putting together a magazine is not a new one. Early fanzines date back to the days of the Spectrum and were paper-based, tape not being the ideal medium – too much tedious fast-forwarding and rewinding would have been necessary, and you would never be sure of stopping the tape in the right place for the article you want.

With the arrival of the modern computer complete with disk drive and oodles of memory, the disk magazine became a possiblility, and a few enthusiasts did produce the things for like-minded officianados. But it's only now, with the popularity and high circulation that PD provides, that the diskzines can get the exposure, and the sales, to make them really popular with mainstream computer users. It's a simple equation: more readers means more contributions which leads to more readers.

The natural progression – or so some publishers thought – was the commercial diskzine. After all, if people were quite happy to pay for sometimes unprofessional public domain efforts, surely they would buy a well-put-together diskzine from their local newsagent's. Various ideas have been tried – including such titles as *Rampage* and *Stampede* – but all have failed because of low circulation.

10 things you can't do with a disk magazine

1) Wrap your chips in it
2) Swat flies with it
3) Make papier maché masks out of it
4) Fold it into a dart
5) Use it to make a Blue Peter Christmas decoration
6) Light a bonfire with it
7) Use it to sleep under if you're a tramp
8) Turn it into a Möbius strip
9) Write a ransom letter using cut-out letters from it
10) Draw silly moustaches on the people in the photos

> *"We have about 18 people writing for* STEN. *Six of us keep the thing running. It's up to the public domain to do the rest!"*
> *Dave Mooney, editor of* STEN

Fun, love and money

The majority of disk magazines, rather than being pure public domain, are licenceware. While this may put restrictions on copying and limit the availability of the magazine, it also makes sure that the authors do at least receive a small financial reward for their efforts. In most cases the cost of licenceware magazines will be little or no more than the cost of a standard public domain disk anyway.

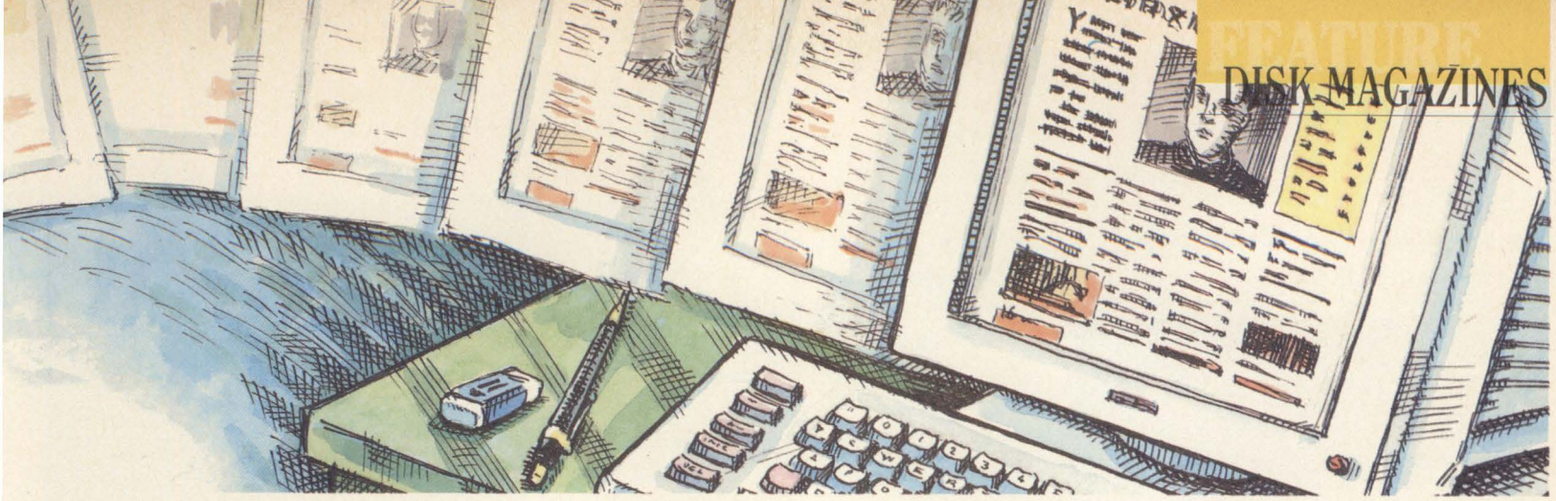
STEN (standing for *ST Enthusiasts Newsletter*) is produced on a strictly public domain basis and is totally free to anybody supplying a blank disk and a stamped addressed envelope. Presumably, as the magazine is free, nobody is making any money out of it, so why write it? Editor Dave Mooney explains:

"Basically, after upgrading from the Spectrum, I just wasn't happy with the magazines that were available for the ST at the time. I set out to put together the sort of magazine that I wanted to read."

A diskzine is a big undertaking, best tackled by a team. Producing a diskzine takes more than just writing the articles; the 'zine has to be designed, edited and distributed. How does *STEN* cope?

"We have about 18 people writing for *STEN* on and off. Six of us keep the thing running and a further three handle the distribution – it's up to the public domain to do the rest!"

Most people will be writing their magazines expecting at least something in return, so once you



have your 'zine up and running, what sort of circulation can you expect? More importantly does Dave Mooney think it's worth the effort?

"As with all real public domain software, there is no way to tell exactly how many magazines are actually circulated. As an example, we sent out about 100 copies of issue five – we can trace circulation to about 500 copies. That's excluding the amount of copies distributed by the 10 or so PD libraries stocking *STEN*. As long as I end up with a good diskzine I'm happy."

Running a disk magazine can also provide valuable experience in both using your machine and in developing writing skills; it is not unusual for a disk magazine producer to move on to write for conventional magazines.

The lowdown

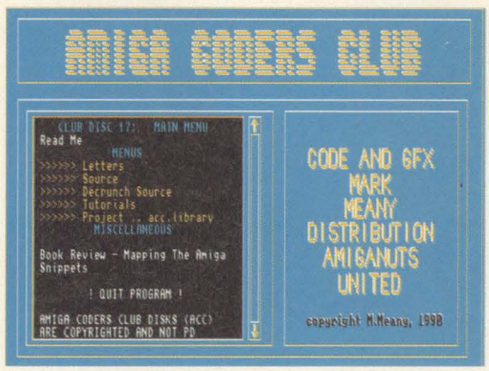
Though disk magazines are now an established part of the computer world they do have their drawbacks.

For the most part editorial standards are not as high as on an average, commercially-produced magazine and spelling mistakes are all too common, and it has to be admitted that screen displays are far from the easiest of things to read. While it might be argued that this is balanced by the nature of the magazine – computer-based magazines for computer users – the traditional magazine still wins through on sheer convenience.

Disk magazines fill a niche: a recent letter to one 'zine cried for, "unprofessional articles for unprofessional readers" (eh? – Ed). Indeed disk magazines contain their own unique brand of articles, a brand which, while useful for some, would never see the light of day if it were not for diskzines, in the same way that a lot of public domain software is just too specialised to ever be sold on a commercial basis. PD

Amiga Coders Club (Amiga)

Amiganuts United, 169, Dale Valley Road, Hollybrook, Southampton SO1 6QX



***The Amiga Coders Club* – take a good look – the chances are it will have changed by next month**

Anyone who has learnt assembly language will tell you that the best way to learn is by example – this in essence is what the *Amiga Coders Club* tries to achieve. Lots of source code examples are included on the disk each month, together with text to guide you through the methods used.

The author of the magazine seems to be an avid programmer himself and nearly every new issue sports a different front end from the last. All are fast and flexible although they don't unfortunately multi-task, meaning you have to quit the program in order to assemble any of the examples.

The *Amiga Coders Club* is not really for beginners and a basic knowledge of assembly language is essential. Having said that, the magazine is put together nicely and could be just what you're looking for.

AMIGA **79%**

Computer Lynx (Amiga)

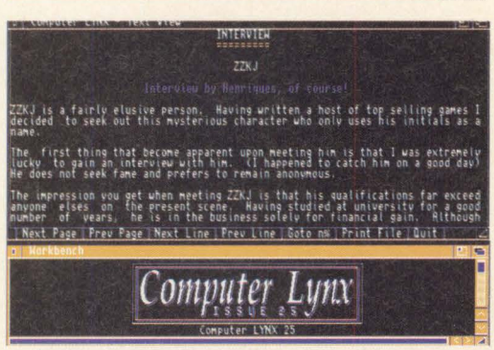
New Age Computing (Lynx), 187, Perrysfield Road, Cheshunt, Herts EN8 0TL

Computer Lynx is released monthly and contains a mixture of interviews, reviews and general news for all Amiga owners. Rather than opting for a customised magazine, the bods behind *Lynx* have chosen to base the magazine on the Amiga's Workbench using the *PPMore* utility. While this might not be as stylish as some other diskzines it means that you can run other programs on the disk while reading the magazine – a definite advantage.

The programs on the disk strike a fair balance between games and utilities, although the editorial is slightly biased towards entertainment. A selection of well written backing tunes provide some pleasant enough background noise while you read.

The disk is always packed to the brim but the key to *Lynx* is quality not quantity; all articles are written to very high standards and would look quite at home in a newsstand magazine. Highly recommended.

AMIGA **89%**


INTERVIEW
ZZKJ
Interview by Nemitous, of course!
ZZKJ is a fairly elusive person. Having written a host of top selling games I decided to seek out this mysterious character who only uses his initials as a name.
The first thing that become apparent upon meeting him is that I was extremely lucky to gain an interview with him. (I happened to catch him on a good day) He does not seek fame and prefers to remain anonymous.
The impression you get when meeting ZZKJ is that his qualifications far exceed anyone elses on the present scene. Having studied at university for a good number of years, he is in the business solely for financial gain. Although
Next Page | Prev Page | Next Line | Prev Line | Goto nn | Print File | Quit
Workbench
Computer Lynx
ISSUE 25
Computer LYNX 25

Being based on the Amiga's workbench, *Lynx* enables you to run the software alongside the reviews!

cont. on p50

Where to go

The diskzines we've reviewed here are just the tip of the proverbial iceberg. Where do you find the rest? Look no further. *Public Domain* is proud to present the complete(ish) guide to diskzines for the ST, PC and Amiga. Whatever your tastes we guarantee there's something out there to tickle your computing fancy:

AMIGA

- ***Amiga Coders Club*** – Amiganuts United, 169 Dale Valley Road, Hollybrook, Southampton SO1 6QX
  Programmers' heaven – knowledge of assembly language an advantage.
- ***Amigaholics*** – Amiganuts United, 169 Dale Valley Road, Hollybrook, Southampton SO1 6QX
  General Amiga coverage and exclusive commercial product demos.
- ***AXS*** – J Walton, 14 Meads Road, Guildford, Surrey GU1 2NA
  Entertainment magazine for the Amiga and game consoles.
- ***Computer Lynx*** – New Age Computing, 187 Perrysfield Road, Cheshunt, Herts EN8 0TL
  Top quality Amiga diskzine – news, views, entertainment and serious.
- ***Digital Access*** – Steven Lord, 6 Stubbing Brink, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire HX7 6LR
  Packed with great public domain software and a fair sprinkling of articles, both entertainment and utilities.
- ***Dreamers (Zirus)*** – Paul Harthen, 43 Boyds Walk, Dukinfield, Cheshire SK16 4AX
  Games coverage for Amiga owners.
- ***The Final Frontier*** – Strictly PD, 11 York Place, Bristol, BS1 5UT
  All the latest news on *Star Trek* and *Star Trek – The Next Generation*.

cont. from p49

Maggie (ST)

Lost Boys/Budgie UK 5, Minster Close, Rayleigh, Essex SS6 8SF

***Maggie* has a colourful GEM front end and some matching colourful language to go along with it**

Compiled by Anglo-German demo crew The Lost Boys, *Maggie* contains articles written by ST enthusiasts from all over Europe. Emphasis is set firmly on the lighter side of ST computing with regular columns devoted to the latest game and demo releases. Those with an interest in programming are catered for with tutorials in STOS, GFA Basic and assembly language. These are supported by source code on disk but most of the tutorials assume a considerable prior knowledge of the languages.

The style is chatty although some of the language is a little 'colourful' in places and therefore may not be suitable for younger readers.

In common with most ST disk magazines the front end is a standard GEM-driven affair. The text viewer itself is fast and friendly making viewing the magazine a joy. Now will somebody put me out of my misery and give me the password so that I can read the hidden article?

ST 85%

Magnetic Media Handle With Care (Amiga)

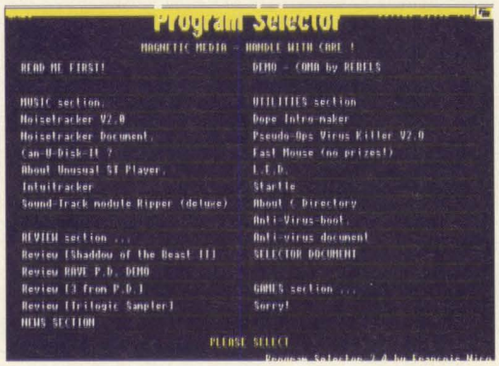
S Learner, 25 Rigbourne Hill, Beccles, Suffolk NR34 9JG

Magnetic Media Handle With Care is undoubtedly winner of the longest diskzine title award, but how does it stand up against the competition in terms of contents?

The magazine is based on the *PPMore* utility, although, unlike *Lynx*, the workbench is not opened and all articles can be selected from a well-designed menu. Programs included on the disk can also be run from this menu.

Articles cover anything and everything Amiga-based and, although quite well written, could do with some editing. The reviews are very good as they not only rate the product but also the supplier – handy if you are thinking of ordering.

Although at one time released regularly *MMHWC* is now limited to special editions, which should help to combat *MMHWC*'s main problem, ie a lack of content. You should be able to find it quite easily in a number of PD libraries.



There's no fiddling around loading files with *Magnetic Media Handle With Care* – just point and click

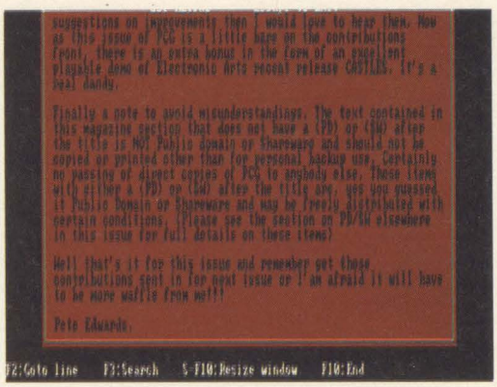
AMIGA 70%

PC Gamer (PC)

P Edwards, PO Box 39, Dagenham, Essex RM10 7UN

PC Gamer is essential for those PC owners who take their games seriously. Whether it be simulations, adventures, strategy or even role-playing games, *PC Gamer* has something to offer. Every issue is packed with reviews of PC games and usually contains at least one complete solution.

Interestingly *Gamer* also has a solution for one of the PC owners' biggest grumbles – that of game prices. Instead of buying a new game, why not just swap one of your completed games with a like-minded adventurer? To help you out the magazine runs a regular classified advert column where you can sell or swap your original PC games. The authors of the magazine also advertise their used games in this section!


suggestions on improvements then I would love to hear them. Now as this issue of PCG is a little bare on the contributions front, there is an extra bonus in the form of an excellent playable demo of Electronic Arts recent release CASTLES. It's a real dandy.
Finally a note to avoid misunderstandings. The text contained in this magazine section that does not have a (PD) or (SW) after the title is NOT Public domain or Shareware and should not be copied or printed other than for personal backup use. Certainly no passing of direct copies of PCG to anybody else. These items with either a (PD) or (SW) after the title are, yes you guessed it Public Domain or Shareware and may be freely distributed with certain conditions. (Please see the section on PD/SW elsewhere in this issue for full details on these items)
Well that's it for this issue and remember get those contributions sent in for next issue or I am afraid it will have to be more waffle from me!!!
Pete Edwards.
F2:Goto line F3:Search S-F10:Resize window F10:End

***PC Gamer*'s friendly text viewer – who wants to use the whole screen anyway?**

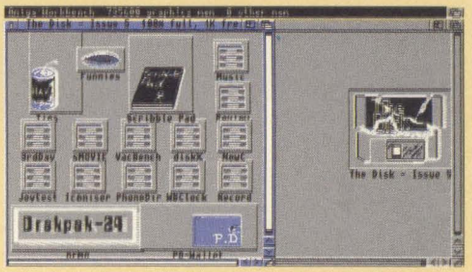
A friendly menu-driven interface guides you through the articles and shouldn't cause even the most inexperienced user any problems.

PC Gamer won't appeal to every PC owner but what it does cover, it covers well.

PC 75%

Fringe Benefits

Not only do diskzines provide a good read, they are also an excellent source of quality PD software. Extras are almost always included on the disks and are usually related to the magazine in some way – an entertainment 'zine might contain the best in games and demos, while a programmers' magazine will almost certainly be packed with source code and so on.



Most disk magazines are filled to bursting point with the pick of the public domain software

- ***General*** – 19 Earn Court, Alloa, Clackmanannshire FK10 1PT
  General Amiga coverage (hence the name).
- ***Lazerdisk*** – James Deavall, 57 Adamthwaite Drive, Blythe Bridge, Stoke-on-Trent ST11 9HL
  Heavy on PD – light on articles.
- ***Magnetic Media Handle With Care*** – 25 Rigbourne Hill, Beccles, Suffolk NR34 9JG
  Menu-driven, good quality magazine for all Amiga owners.
- ***Newsflash*** – 17 Bit Software, PO Box 97, Wakefield
  Dutch diskzine covering all things Amiga.
- ***NZAOG*** – PO Box 89026, Torbay, Auckland, New Zealand
  Multimedia-style diskzine produced using *Magnetic Pages*.
- ***Scanner*** – Telescan, 1a Grantham Road, Handsworth Road, Blackpool
  Two-disk general interest diskzine which includes some good tutorials.

ST

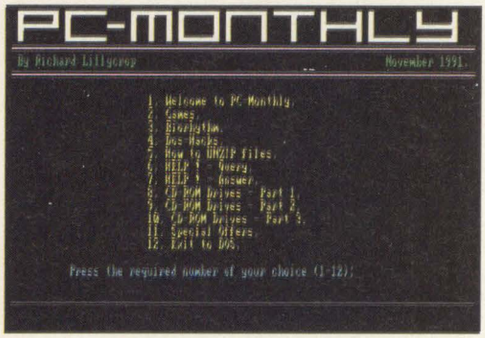
- ***Disk Space*** – Budgie UK, 5 Minster Close, Rayleigh, Essex SS6 8SF
  Mainly serious STOS diskzine.
- ***The Untouchables*** – Budgie UK, 5 Minster Close, Rayleigh, Essex, SS6 8SF
  Great entertainment and programming-orientated diskzine.
- ***Maggie*** – Budgie UK, 5 Minster Close, Rayleigh, Essex SS6 8SF
  The lighter side of ST computing personified.
- ***Spandefang*** – Spandefang Software, 4 Cambridge Terrace, Harrogate, North Yorkshire

PC-Monthly (PC)

R Lillycrop, 19, Nelson Court, Watton, Norfolk IP25 6EL

PC-Monthly, now in its fifth issue, is a monthly magazine for the more serious PC owner. Run by one dedicated PC user it contains articles covering various aspects of the machine and a regular forum for solving all your PC-related problems. A selection of good quality public domain and shareware programs is contained on the disk each month; all are archived to save space.

You access all the sections from a custom-written display program. It seems that only one page of text can be displayed per article – if the article is written


PC-MONTHLY
By Richard Lillycrop
November 1991
1. Welcome to PC Monthly.
2. Games.
3. Biorhythm.
4. Dos Hooks.
5. How to UNZIP files.
6. HELP ! - Query.
7. HELP ! - Answer.
8. CD ROM Drives - Part 1.
9. CD ROM Drives - Part 2.
10. CD ROM Drives - Part 3.
11. Special Offers.
12. Exit to DOS.
Press the required number of your choice (1-12):

PC playing up? It's *PC-Monthly* to the rescue! Could do with some improvements, but there's not a lot arond for the PC

over more than one page then the first is called Page 1, the second Page 2 and so on, and must be called from the main menu in succession!

The editorial is a bit sparse, although as the magazine grows and more people begin to contribute this should begin to improve.

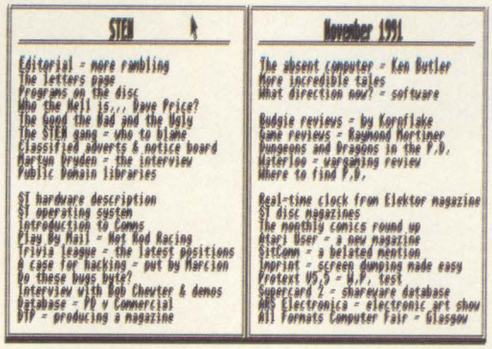
Given that the choice for PC owners is a bit limited, *PC-Monthly* is worth a look.

PC **45%**

STEN (ST)

Dave Mooney, 14 School Road, Morningside, Newmains, Lanarkshire

If you want to find out what you can do on your ST beyond playing games then *STEN* is well worth a look. It focuses on the more serious side of the ST with interviews, PD reviews and general chat all


STEN
November 1991
Editorial - more rambling
The letters page
Programs on the disc
Who the Hell is... Dave Price?
The Good the Bad and the Ugly
The STEN gang - who to blame
Classified adverts & notice board
Martyn Pryden - the interview
Public Domain libraries
ST hardware description
ST operating system
Introduction to Comms
Play by Mail - Hot Rod Racing
Trivia League - the latest positions
A case for hacking - put by Marcion
Do these bugs byte?
Interview with Bob Chester & demos
Database - PD v Commercial
DTP - producing a magazine
The absent computer - Ken Butler
More incredible tales
What direction now? - software
Budgie reviews - by Koroflake
Game reviews - Raymond Mortimer
Dungeons and Dragons in the P.D.
Waterloo - wargaming review
Where to find P.D.
Real-time clock from Elektor magazine
ST disc magazines
The monthly comics round up
Atari User - a new magazine
SitComm - a belated mention
Imprint - screen dumping made easy
Protext V5.5 - W.P. test
Supercard 2 - shareware database
ARS Electronica - electronic art show
All Formats Computer Fair - Glasgow

Do you feel the need for a read? Look no further – *STEN* has more content than most other magazines put together!

contained in a rather nice GEM shell.

The editorial is up to a very high standard, all articles being well put together and spell checked. The editor also scans the public domain for interesting texts for the magazine and recent finds include Atari's original hardware specification for the ST and *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the BIOS*. News coverage is likewise comprehensive and effective with more than a touch of wit.

STEN probably contains more to read than any of the other diskzines on review and it certainly makes a pleasant change to see the number of programs on disk limited by the number of articles!

ST **89%**

ST Plug (ST)

Budgie UK, 5 Minster Close, Rayleigh, Essex

ST Plug is produced on a fairly regular basis by a Canadian ST User group and is distributed in this country by Budgie UK. All articles are contained in one large text file and can be viewed using the extremely quick display program provided on disk, or from within your favourite word processor, if you prefer.

Special codes are included in the text which call up pictures or music relating to the article. This makes light work of describing complex screens and relieves the monotony of pages upon pages of plain text. The review copy, for example, plays the theme tune from *Batman* while you read a description of the game.

Owing to the differences in US release dates, you usually find that European software is reviewed in this country long before *ST Plug* ever gets hold of

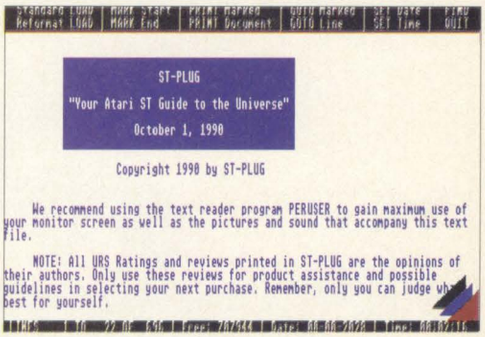
And now for something completely different

No matter what your interests (within reason!), the chances are there is a diskzine to suit. A rummage among the more unusual diskzines turned up *AXS*, an Amiga diskzine dedicated almost entirely to consoles, 'zines covering just about every programming language you are ever likely to encounter and

THE FINAL FRONTIER - MAIN MENU
F1 - EDITORIAL MENU
F2 - MUSIC/GRAPHICS MENU
F3 - REGULAR ITEMS MENU
F4 - REVIEWS MENU
F5 - STAR TREK VI NEWS
F6 - CONVENTION NEWS/REPORTS
F7 - COMPETITION
F8 - CONTENTS
F9 - COMING IN ISSUE 6
F1 - SEE INTRO AGAIN (F1 MEG)
THE FINAL FRONTIER
...ISSUE ONE...

Who needs television? *The Final Frontier* diskzine brings you all the news and gossip from one of America's more believable drama programs

even a magazine dedicated to *Star Trek*, which despite its rather cult contents was one of the best-presented magazines we've seen. Trekkies should contact: *The Final Frontier*, Strictly PD, 11 York Place, Bristol, BS1 5UT. And tell them *Public Domain* sent you!


ST-PLUG
"Your Atari ST Guide to the Universe"
October 1, 1990
Copyright 1990 by ST-PLUG
We recommend using the text reader program PERUSER to gain maximum use of your monitor screen as well as the pictures and sound that accompany this text file.
NOTE: All URS Ratings and reviews printed in ST-PLUG are the opinions of their authors. Only use these reviews for product assistance and possible guidelines in selecting your next purchase. Remember, only you can judge what best for yourself.

Sick of European software? Check out the latest news stateside, courtesy of *ST Plug*

it. But having said that *ST Plug* is ideal for anyone interested in stateside news and reviews.

ST **80%**

Programmers magazine – all source, no articles.

● ***STazine*** – Martin Betts, 5 Hempsted Mews, Chapel Break, Bowthorpe, Norwich NR5 9NL
Up and coming diskzine for all ST owners, well worth checking out.

● ***STellar*** – Mark Nobes, Newholme, Aston Road, Chipping Campden, Glos GL55 6HR
STOS diskzine including a regular feature on the environment (right on).

● ***STEN*** – Dave Mooney, 14 School Road, Morningside, Newmains, Lanarkshire
Well-written ST diskzine for the more discerning reader.

● ***STOS Bits*** – Budgie UK, 5 Minster Close, Rayleigh, Essex SS6 8SF
Hints and tips for all *STOS* and assembly language programmers.

● ***ST Plug*** – Budgie UK, 5 Minster Close, Rayleigh, Essex SS6 8SF
High quality Canadian diskzine.

● ***STUD*** – Shane Rodwell, 19 Collings Place, Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 0EX
Public domain-only ST diskzine.

PC

● ***PC Gamer*** – P Edwards, PO Box 39, Dagenham, Essex RM10 7UN
Adventure, strategy and simulation coverage for PC owners.

● ***PC Monthly*** – R Lillycrop, 19 Nelson Court, Watton, Norfolk IP25 6EL
Packed with archived PD every month.

Inclusion in this directory does not imply that Public Domain *endorses or recommends any individual magazine in any way.*

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G001 Star Trek (2), Superb
G005 Llamatron, Excellent (Get It)
G009 Paranoid
G049 Hack, Kill, Kill, Kill
G008 Drip! Excellent, *
G027 Wet Beaver, Great Fun *
G036 Compilation 1 (4 Games)
G018 Blast, + 3 Games
G050 Amoeba, Invaders, + More

UTILITIES

U066 Assasins Boot-Utils
U009 Sid, Directory Util, Brill!!
U019 Mega Fonts A-Z (3)
U003 List Maker
U033 St. Emulator + Utils, It Works!
U050 Spectrum Emulator + Utils
U017 Jazz Bench, Great Workbench
U070 Dope, Intro Maker, Great!
U001 C Manual (4)

MEGA MUSIC

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M004 Pink Floyd - The Wall
M050 Seal Crazy - Remix
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M010 Amiga Chart 5
M028 Pet Shop Boys, Rent + Others
M034 David Bowie/Fashion
M060 100 C64, Tunes/Brill!!
M049 Vivaldi Four Seasons, Good
M007 Flash, Queen Well Done!

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D069 Budbrain, Demo (2)
D002 Phenomena - Interspace
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Life on board

You've got your computer, your modem and your terminal software, so you're ready to go on-line with your very own bulletin board. Well, maybe, but you probably won't last long, because running a BBS takes a lot more effort than that, as long-time sysop Malcolm Burridge of Bath BBS will tell you...

Running a bulletin board is no easy job. Just ask Malcolm Burridge. He set up the Bath BBS over three years ago. At the time he was an enthusiast who set up the board as a hobby. Now it takes up virtually every spare moment he has, and now tends to dictate his life as opposed to the other way around.

"I have about six hours sleep a night. The rest of my time is spent either at work, or on a computer in one way or another," admits Burridge.

"Originally it was just the sheer fact of being able to make one computer talk to another that made me want to set up a bulletin board. Back in the ZX81 days it was no mean feat to be actually able to do it. Now it's so easy and it has got to the stage where, even if I wanted to pull the plug out, I don't think I could."

Not that he regrets starting up the board. "I know this corny but I'm doing something for other people that suits me because it's also something I like doing."

Linked to the world

Bath BBS is run from Malcolm's unassuming, terraced house just a couple of miles outside the Roman city of Bath. Passers by would never guess that 24 hours a day it is linked up to the whole of the computer world and has swapped digital information with over 4,000 callers from countries as far away as America and New Zealand.

One of the back bedrooms is packed with STs, PCs, modems, faxes, hard drives and monitors. The only clues that your in someone's house and not the bridge of a spaceship in *Doctor Who* (apart from the walls don't wobble when you raise your voice) are the flowery curtains and the cuddly toys that sit lopsidedly on the various pieces of technology.

"The Atari has been running for three years now and it's only been switched off twice in that time."

"I've always been into comms, but it's only been in the last three years that I could afford a machine that is capable of doing it," says Malcolm. "I first got interested in comms back in the old ZX81 days. That shows how far back it goes.

"Then I got a Dragon computer and built my own modem. So that's what got me started and I played around with that. At the time I couldn't go any further because the Dragon wasn't powerful enough to do much, really."

But Malcolm was well and truly bitten by the comms bug.

"Really, it extends to an interest in computers and anything technical. Once it was started it was just a determination to make it a success. I've never really been successful at anything I've done in the past and this time I was determined.

"So I went and got the ST about three or four years ago and found a bulletin board program. It was *Michtron BBS II*. I've always stuck with *Michtron* since I first got it. In fact, I think that I'm probably one of the few who's still using it. I stick with it because it's the only one that will run the multi-line easily. Other programs will do it, but it's a case of digging around in the machinery."

Malcolm Burridge checks through the files uploaded on to Bath BBS in the back bedroom of his home just a few miles outside Bath

Routine work

Running a board takes more than just a couple of minutes a day. Here's some of the regular checks that have to be made:

Every day

- Check the messages that people have left in the message area, making sure that there is no bad language in them
- Answer the questions that people have left for the sysop
- Check the software that has been uploaded to make sure that it works correctly and that it's not commercial software
- A general check on the system to make sure that it's operating smoothly
- Make sure that no viruses have been uploaded

Weekly

- Back up the board by switching it to another hard drive

Trusty equipment

The board has been on-line for 24 hours a day for over three years. Surely this must be a bit of a strain on the equipment?

"It's been very reliable actually. The Atari has been running for three years now, and I've only had to switch it off twice in that time. I've had the cover

cont. on p54

cont. from p53

off to press in the chips or whatever, but it is very reliable. The hard drives are the same."

Bath BBS is now established as one of the leading bulletin boards for the ST, but this didn't happen without a lot of effort.

"When I started I sent out thousands of adverts to every magazine that gave away free ads. In they went every month. If people don't know about a board then they won't phone in. Newcomers have really got to push."

He has done more to promote the board by linking up with leading Atari magazine *ST Format*. Now he carries the contents of the magazine's cover disk on his board every month, which has proven to be an advantageous move.

"There's a lot more people ringing up now than when I started. Since I linked up with *ST Format* things have improved a great deal. *ST Format* didn't take much convincing. There is a definite relationship between the magazine and the number of calls. If I go a couple of months with no mention then the calls drop off. A little bit in the magazine, no matter what it's for, then the call level goes up again."

Malcolm also has plans to link up with a PC mag in the future, but he's going to have to get the PC side of the board up and running first. At the moment PC users download PC files they can use on their machines as Bath BBS has a PC file area, but, as Malcolm admits, it could not really function as a fully-fledged PC board until he has a PC to run it on.

> *"The PC users just don't want to know about the ST. As soon as they see the letters 'ST' they're gone."*

"I was going to just build up the two on one machine but then I decided they don't really mix. Lots of people say, 'Oh yeah, you get an ST and you can put an emulator on it and use PC files.' Well, yes, that's fine, but the PC users don't want to know about the ST. As soon as they see the letters ST they're gone. I've probably had three to four thousand people through the board since it started and of those I suppose 1,500 of them have been PC users. I think I can quite honestly say they only use the board a couple of times and then they disappear."

The regulars

He has more luck keeping hold of his ST regulars.

"The ST side of it is pretty settled now. We've got some good regular users who upload files. I've just had to tell a few of them off because they were getting a bit silly with the messages. It started when one person left a long message which was fine the way he did it, but then everybody else just got carried away. It came to a competition to see who could write the longest message. So I had to put a stop to that. Generally, they're a good crowd and I don't have any trouble. I have the odd few who log on and play up but then they don't go any further. At the moment I get about 30 or 40 calls a night. At weekends that can go up to 50 or 60."

But he would like to see the board develop further, and the next step is to build up the PC side. He has a PC but at the moment only uses it to check files that have been downloaded.

"The first PC arrived a few months ago. Obviously I couldn't test any PC stuff before then. The Atari will read PC disks but it's not a good way of doing it. So I bought a cheap second-hand AT. I'm also building up an old XT, probably to run a PC board if it's fast enough, but if not we'll use the AT."

Any plans for an Amiga section?

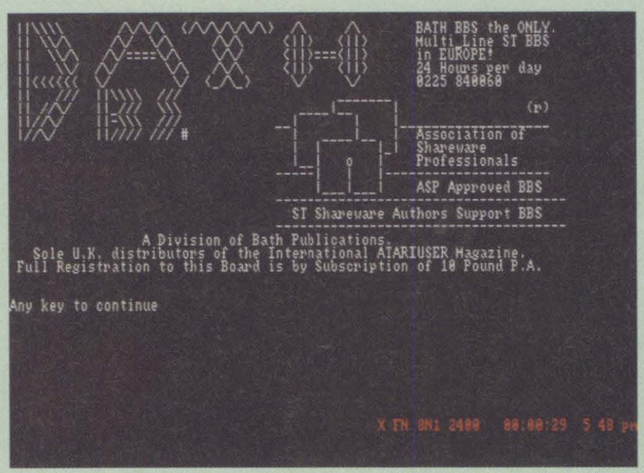
"I don't know anything about the Amiga. It

So what can you expect to see when get on-board?

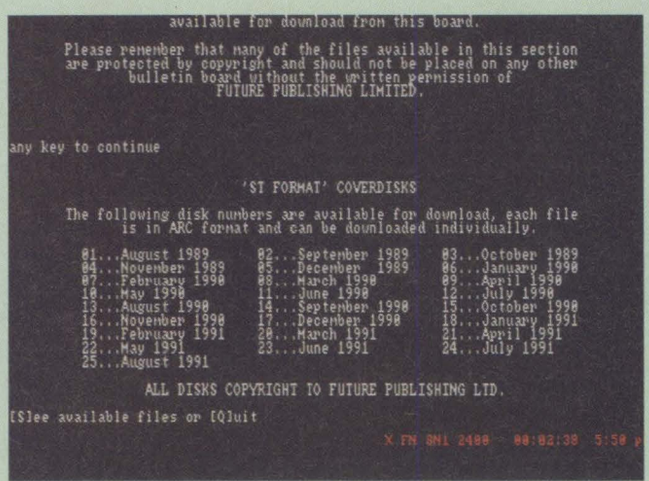
If you want to get on-board you're going to need a modem, a computer and a telephone. The good thing about bulletin boards is that any computer can log on to any bulletin board so long as you have the correct modem to link up to the board (different boards have different downloading speeds and protocols which have to match the setting on your modem and your terminal – check out our feature last issue). A board may be flagged as an ST board but all that means is that the software it holds is ST software, which will not be of any interest to PC or Amiga users. Also these boards can act like remote user groups, so ST owners who log on to an ST board know they have more chance of getting in touch with other ST users than if they logged on to an Amiga board. But there is nothing to stop them logging onto any board just to check out the message areas. And you can still download the software, you just won't be able to use it.

Some of the things you can expect to find on a bulletin board include:

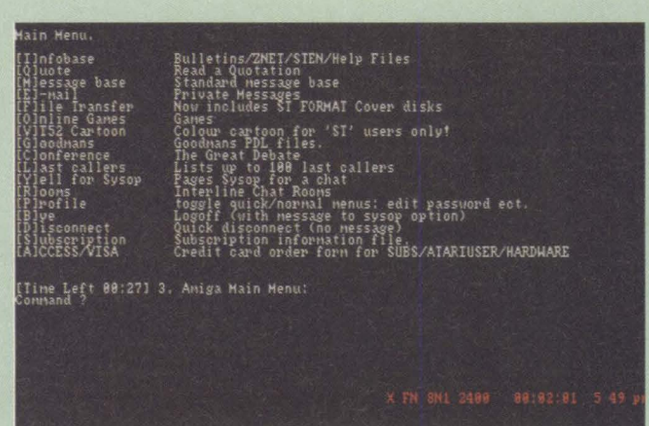
- FILE AREAS – Text sections devoted to any number of topics put uploaded by both the sysop and other uses. Topics can range from specific computers to *The Simpsons*.
- SOFTWARE – Bulletin boards are a valuable source of public domain software
- MESSAGE AREAS/ELECTRONIC MAIL – Where you can leave messages or questions for other users or the sysop to read, and where people can leave messages for you. Some boards are networked which means that your message won't only be read by people on that board, but by any users of any boards networked with it – and they could be boards on the other side of the world.
- ON-LINE GAMES – Some BBSs run multi-user games where more than one person can play and the actions of one player affects all the other players.



This is the first thing you see when you log on to Bath BBS. The graphics on BBSs are never too complex as it would take too long to transfer them if they were



Bath BBS has a deal going with *ST Format* whereby it carries the contents of that magazine's cover disk in one of its file areas



This is the main menu of Bath BBS which shows all the different file areas available on the boar. Note also that there is an on-board time limit

seems silly starting up an Amiga section when I know nothing about it. How do I answer a question if I haven't got a clue what the desktop looks like?

"In time I will buy one, and then, you never know, I might build up the Amiga side as well."

All of which should be good news for BT.

"There's two lines on the ST board at the moment. There will be two on the PC board. Then I've got my own one and the fax one so that's six lines. I did at one point have three lines on the ST, but things went quiet and I stole one for the fax. Now it's running on two, but it's close to its limit. It may end up going back to three.

"It's now getting to the stage where it's costing too much money. I've got subscriptions but it's only £10 a year. It's voluntary and not many people pay it. Though it helps, it's not enough to cover my costs."

The cost of obsession

Totting up the amount the board has cost him over the years is not something Malcolm likes thinking about too deeply.

"I'd say we were talking of the region of five to six thousand pounds, but don't tell the wife. Needless to say, the missus has never been happy with the board. She'll get in there sometimes, but the she'll go months when she'll take no notice whatsoever."

There must be times when the call rate is down and Malcolm just feels like giving up and going back to leading a normal life.

"Oh, yeah. Especially when it goes on and on. I've had times when it's gone on for months and it's been really quiet and I've thought, 'Oh, pull the plug out.' But I can't. So it gets depressing sometimes "

Unlike many other bulletin boards, Bath BBS does not have much contact with other ST boards.

"It's my fault really," admits Malcolm. "Most other boards are networked, but I don't agree with the way the network is set up. There always appears to be problems. Basically it boils down to I don't want anyone telling me how to run my board. I do it my way and if people don't like it they don't call."

Wise words

So what advice would he give to anyone considering starting up their own BBS?

"Don't! I can well imagine anyone starting a new board up now – because there are a lot more now then when I started – sitting there now twiddling their thumbs wondering, 'Why does nobody phone me?'

"They start half-heartedly, that's the biggest problem. They get a machine, they get themselves a modem and think they'll start a bulletin board. They try to do it with floppy drives, they try to do it on Mum's phone, and obviously Mum's gonna say, 'You can't use it during the day.' So they end up starting up with a part-time board and they sit there waiting for calls. If you start it half-heartedly, people see that it's half-hearted and then they just don't bother. Even if they come along to start with they just go away because they see it's not put together properly.

"If they really can't afford another phone line they can get away with just one, but they must have a hard drive. 90 per cent of people who use bulletin boards want to download programs. If you're using floppies you very limited to the number of programs you can fit on there.

"Basically you need a hard drive as big as you can afford, an extra phone line if possible and a good modem. And remember that the computer, once it's being used for the bulletin board, can't be used for anything else."

As well as running Bath BBS, Malcolm also has another couple of computer-related projects on the boil. He has to secure the sole UK distribution rights to the American Atari enthusiasts' magazine *Atari User International* and he has also become involved in an ST shareware association.

"Something needs to be done on the ST shareware side. The men in suits are coming in, and they don't give a damn about the programmers. They mistakenly think that there's money to be made, which is not what shareware's all about."

So has it been worth all the effort?

"Yeah. But I don't know why I do it, really. I used to drive around in fast cars, but I got bored with that so now I stay in and sit at computers all night." PD

Machine specifics

The ST side of Bath BBS is run on:

- An Atari STFM 1Mb
- Michtron BBS software
- 65Mb ICD hard drive (another 85Mb drive to be added soon)
- Two Amstrad SM2400 modems
- Two standard BT phonelines

It will accept calls at 300/1200-75/1200/2400 8-N-1 (This are the settings your modem should be configured to – see the feature in the last issue of *Public Domain*).

The Amstrad modems that are used to run Bath BBS might not be the latest in technology, but sysop Malcolm rates their reliability

When the PC board is up and running (which should be early this year) it will be run on a 286 PC with the same software and using:

- A 200Mb Seagate drive
- Two Dataphone PRO-4 modems
- It will accept calls at 300/1200-75/1200/2400 8-N-1 with MNP 5

Beating BT

Though the board is linked up to BT, because all the calls are incoming, Malcolm's phone bills are not excessive. But he has had some grief over the line rental.

"I've been arguing with BT a lot over this. When I first got started they had the low user rental scheme running whereby if your outgoing call rate was lower than a certain amount you had a rebate off the rental. Technically, it was not for the sort of thing I'm doing; it's for the old girl who sits at home and uses the phone once in a blue moon.

"But nevertheless, as it stood, I was entitled to the rebate. Then last April they stopped it. BT said I wasn't entitled to it. I argued, "Well, yes I am!"

This went on for a few months and in the end they agreed that I was right and I could have the rebate.

"But now they've changed the rules anyway. They've bought in a new scheme in which if you have more than one line you don't get a rebate any more. I'm at the stage now where the original lines are still on the low user rebate, but the new lines for the PC won't be. I'll end up with all sorts of rates."

DIRECTORY ENQUIRIES – GETTING ON BOARD

There are hundreds of bulletin boards around the country, far too many to list here. But log on to a couple of these choice boards we've listed, get bitten by the comms bug and you'll discover a whole host of other BBSs waiting for your call:

PC

- PC Forum 0322 335348
- PC Link 0375 674046
- PC Storehouse 0494 728094
- Direct Line 081-841 1847

ST

- Bath BBS.....0225 840060
- Stun.....061-429 9803
- My Little Phoney 0793 849044
- Starbase 1 .....071-733 3992

Amiga

- Scorpion's Nest 0228 26478
- The Plug-Ole 021-472 0256
- Cheam Amiga BBS.....081-644 8714
- 01 For Amiga 071-377 1358

Multi-format

- Scottish Opus.....041-880 7863
- Aspects 061-792 0260

Business & Applications

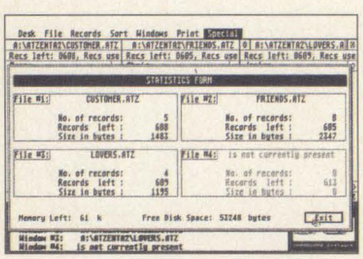
Running a business without a computer is like a party without alcohol – possible but it'll never really get going. But the software is so expensive... or is it? Not if you consider PD and shareware, and Jerry Glenwright's the man to tell you all about it...

REVIEWS INDEX

Almanac (ST)	58
AmigaFox (Amiga)	58
Atzenta V2 (ST)	56
Bank'n (Amiga)	62
bBase II (Amiga)	59
Business Card Maker (Amiga)	65
DataStore v1.2 (ST)	60
Double Sentry Accounts (ST)	65
Easy Presentation Graphics (PC)	66
Ed (PC)	64
ElectroCAD (Amiga)	57
Enable/Write (Amiga)	59
FastBase (ST)	64
GoalSeeker (PC)	60
Hotel and Public House Inventory Audit Software (PC)	57
LyneWriter (PC)	59
mCalc (PC)	62
Nag (Amiga)	64
onSchedule (ST)	57
Opus (ST)	62
Print Plus (PC)	56
Text Engine (Amiga)	66
Uedit (Amiga)	65
VisiCalc (Amiga)	60

Atzenta (Shareware)

ST • AU-136 • Caledonia PDL 250 Oldtown Road, Hilton, Inverness IV2 4PT ☎ 0463 225736



Comprehensive on-line statistics and user-definable windows make *Atzenta probably* the best scheduling software around

Atzenta, its authors claim, is one of the, "...few complete address/phone books available for the Atari ST". Just where has this man been living? There are more address programs for the ST than Wongs in the Chinese phone book – and then some!

So, baulk at the appalling lie intended to make you register and descend to the desktop where your hardened heart will melt. Although *Atzenta 2.0* (lousy name, right?) isn't unique, it's certainly one of the prettiest phone books you'll ever come across.

Let's take a minute to get *that* name out of the way. Apparently, *Atzenta* is the closest Greek equivalent to the English word 'agenda' – big fat hairy deal! Why not call it *ElectroAddress* or *Find-o-Phone* or some such? My ancestors were Vikings so I write an address book and call it *Strømmfëld*, right?

Atzenta opens to a darkened desktop and standard menu-bar. The bottom left corner sports a window-changing gadget so that you can click between any of the four open documents the program supports quickly and easily. The program's written in C and the window manipulation shows it. Choose something which requires disk access from a dialogue and you're reminded of such early ST efforts as *1st Word*. Remember the desperately slow screen updates? Half-erased windows waiting an eternity to disappear? *Atzenta* clones them (im)perfectly.

That said, Harry (*Atzenta*'s author...) gets around the problem by providing menu options to display the windows side-by-side, overlapping, one below another and so on, which enables you to define default positions for them. The program generally offers so many screen prettying functions that you can forgive it for the slowness.

Lists of names, addresses and telephone numbers are maintained as capably as such lists can be, but what helps *Atzenta* to rear its head out of mediocrity line is its auto-phone dialling, password protection, superb on-line help, fast sorting on *any* field and comprehensive stats reports of anything and everything to do with your record files and ST.

Couple that healthy conglomeration with a jinky calendar featuring memos, string searches and more, and you've got an address book to shake nations, all for a registration fee of less than a tenner.

Atzenta? Ring my bell!

ST 75%

Print Plus (Shareware)

PC • Nildram Software 26 Stanley Hill, Amersham, Buckinghamshire HP7 9BD ☎ 0494 729236

There are probably more cries for printing help bulging out of computer Agony Uncles' in-trays every Monday morning than for all other computerish subjects put together. *The New Scientist*, or some such organ, estimated that if all the people who couldn't figure out how to get their 24-pin printer to work with their business graphics package were laid end-to-end in the London Underground, they'd probably reach from Oxford Circus to, well, Leicester Square at least! So what better little knick-knack to come up with for print-poor PC pundits than a routine to interface between them and their errant hard copy devices?

Right! That's what Lambert Klein (*not* he of undies fame...) thought and our boy decided to do something about it. The result is *Print Plus*, representing probably *several* man hours of intensive programming.

Simple device set-up and file selection and on-line help smooths the way for PC printing

As unlikely as it may seem, a program to unravel the mysteries associated with reproduction (a kind of pin matrix knee-trembler...) requires its own *25-page* manual.

Any-road-up, *Print Plus* provides a simple-to-use menuing interface so that all you have to do is click (yep, it's mouse-compatible) or point with the

cursor keys to reproduce files on your printer. In addition, the program can be instructed to skip blank lines, produce on-screen print previews, and copy and delete files. It's rather like those DOS overlays reviewed last month with the print routines thrown in for good measure.

You can elect to print all pages or a selection, initiate batch printing (ie, tag several files and print them in sequence without user-intervention), print to disk files (useful for creating pure ASCII files if your word processor doesn't support the feature) and one or two other dot-orientated extras that will have rank beginners slavering. Most popular printers are supported (Oki, Toshiba, Panasonic and the all-important Epson) and the program makes creating custom drivers easy.

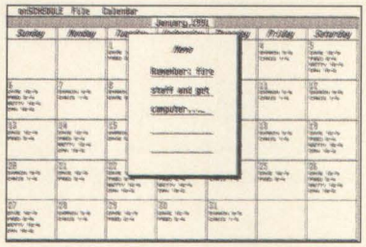
OK, honesty time. For me, *Print Plus* is a waste of space. It's cumbersome and decidedly odd to run a third-party program simply to do what DOS and any application worth its salt is perfectly capable of doing.

That said, *Print Plus* is well thought-out, good-looking and works very well. Maybe I'm just a little too removed from the days when I pressed BREAK on a ZX81, watched the BASIC code scroll up the screen and thought I'd broken the machine. Everyday, new owners take up with the PC and all suffer the inevitable agonies of getting it to talk to their peripherals. Anything which eases that process has got to be good news, and at just £14.95 to register, it's a snip...

PC **80%**

onSchedule (PD)

ST • AU-132 • Caledonia PDL
250 Oldtown Road, Hilton,
Inverness IV2 4PT
☎ 0463 225736



Generating day plans for shift workers is a drag, right? But with *onSchedule*, the task is a positive pleasure

Here's an interesting little novelty – a program to help you construct sensible shift plans for those who perform weekly shift work (nurses, coal-miners, firemen, street-walkers and the like).

Apparently, those whose responsibility it is to work out sensible shifts for employees suffer agonising moments when they pencil Reg in on the day his Dear Old Mum is being lowered into her earthy resting place, or bung Ron on the back shift on protection money night – and workers are apt to become just a little disgruntled on such occasions.

This program behaves rather like a standard spreadsheet, but unlike that ubiquitous application, the program's functions are geared to meet the needs of the caring (ha!) employer. The program opens to a gridded screen, the cells of which represent days in the current month (similar to a wall-planner). To construct a shift, click in a cell and enter the employee's name and the times you want the person to work (Reg, 9am – 1pm for example). Continue in this fashion throughout the month until you have what you hope is a reasonable plan of action for everyone on the payroll.

So why not just use pencil and paper? Well, at any time during the planning process you can summon a projected total of hours for any or all the employees on the grid. By gathering a list of employee objections to any given day, you can plan around them ensuring that Reg gets to pay his last respects, and Ron has time to slap around a frightened shop-keeper or two while still working the requisite number of hours.

The results can be reproduced on any dot-matrix printer or saved as a *Degas* file – and using this latter option, you could add highlighting and so on and distribute a copy to each person. To keep the process humming along, there are plenty of key and clickable shortcuts to clear single cells, weeks, and entire months! Creating a new shift plan is as simple as pressing Control-C and a light caress of the Undo key will delete it.

All this, and the accompanying read.me and doc files are actually literate. No spelling mistakes, only one or two grammatical errors, they scan well and are pleasant to read. This guy'll have me out of a job...

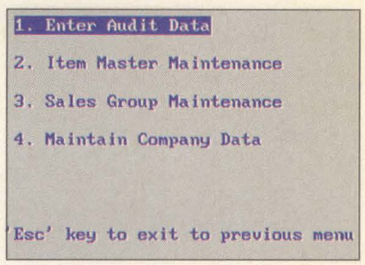
ST **80%**

Hotel and Public House Inventory Audit Software (Shareware)

PC • D G Wilkin, 3 Miles Close,
Stanway, Colchester, Essex

Yeah, right! The name's ridiculous (especially considering it's aimed at

cont. on p58


1. Enter Audit Data
2. Item Master Maintenance
3. Sales Group Maintenance
4. Maintain Company Data
'Esc' key to exit to previous menu

Even dull accounting software needs more than a tawdry menu front-end to stand a chance of being used. Blink, and you've missed it...

Scheme your own schematics without the fuss

ElectroCAD (Shareware)

Amiga • 1451 • Crazy Joe's
145 Effingham Street, Rotherham S65 1BL
☎ 0709 829286

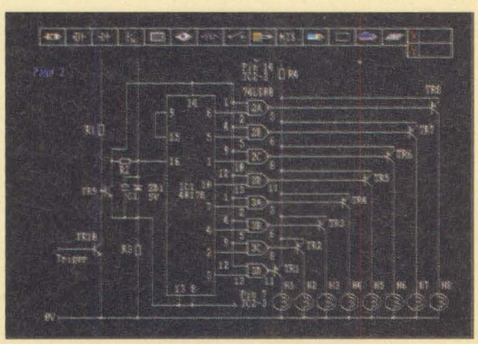
Put down that soldering iron and pay attention, because those of you who thrill to the mention of resistors, capacitors, Darlington pairs and the like, are about to learn about a very important piece of software...

ElectroCAD is a comprehensive schematic designer for the electronic doodler. If you're the kind of techno-tinkerer who burns the lights to the small hours assembling delicate components into whistling key fobs, computer-controlled disco lights and the like, you are probably aware that sketching the schematics for such circuits is a tricky business, requiring deft use of components templates – an awful lot of pencil lead flows under the eraser before a decent drawing emerges. With *ElectroCAD* however, a hefty investment in india-rubber and a bedroom floor littered with discarded blueprints are a thing of the past.

The program provides an on-screen drawing board dedicated to the design of electronic circuits. A palette of components spans the top of the screen and by clicking and dragging, you can position them anywhere on the board, building up extremely accurate schematic drawings in the process.

Of course as any electro-experimenter knows, there are many variations on a component's theme – dozens of different types of capacitor, transistor, resistor and so on. But as a component is clicked, a dialogue box appears enabling you to cycle through its available incarnations. Select the transistor for example, and you're regaled with NPNs, PNPs, N Channel FETs, Twin-Gated N Channel FETs and all manner of other exciting variations. The cyclic menu can be single-stepped or cycled continuously so choosing the correct device is extremely fast.

In addition to the components, there are tools to draw boxes, circles, ellipses and lines, while others position labels, determine the X, Y coordinates of any item on the 'page' and so on. There's even a rubber in case you manage to outsmart the program's sophistication and make a mistake. And by summoning the standard menu bar, you can zoom in on any area of the screen, change the colours or print your schematic.



With a full compliment of electronic components and plenty of drawing tools, *ElectroCAD* is ideal for schematics...

All in all, an excellent snippet of software. No lumps of fat or gristle, it's the kind of thing the youthful Clive Sinclair lusted after, at a kind of registration fee that everyone else lusts after – £7.99. Avoid the agonies associated with designing electronic no-nos such as the C5: get a copy of *ElectroCAD*!

AMIGA **80%**

cont. from p57

the average pissed publican) but then, there simply aren't that many hostelry-orientated auditing packages available, so Wilkin D G can call it what he damn well pleases.

What the package aims to do is keep track of bottles, barrels and bar snacks (and probably all those 'watered' percentages you're stashing away for a rainy day...) so that when it comes to stocktaking, you and the poor students who get 75p an hour to pull pints at the weekends will find the task an easy one.

For the not inconsequential figure of £79, you get a suite of bar-based accounting software with a rudimentary front-end tacked on. In these days of drop-down *everything*, *HAPHIAS* (or huffy-arse, a name far more suitable...) looks decidedly prehistoric. You access Menu options by pressing their associated numeric key, whereupon the next menu in the sequence is displayed.

Straightforward, sure, but look who's expected to use the program – fat, red-nosed and bearded, with one hand in the till and the other up the bar-maid's lycra micro, and I'm not talking about the pocket computer she keeps in a stretchy cover...

Even with the simple menuing, things are not always what they seem. Select a perfectly legitimate option and you are – occasionally, I grant, but more often than is acceptable – regaled with a curt, 'Press Esc to cancel – Any key to continue'. Hammering on 'any key' however, merely dumps you back from whence you came. It's not quite the logical sequence of events that years of software reviewing have led me to expect. And if the operation wasn't a legitimate one, then surely it would be better for the author to advise the user of the fact?

Selecting help, doesn't. A copyright notice is displayed then you're dumped right back into the program.

OK, OK, I can work out how to get around these bugettes, but can the archetypal publican? You know, those guys who think pub walls look attractive littered with fake horse brasses, yard-of-ale receptacles and 'snaps' of them and their 'other 'alves' slurping cheap red wine from a stuffed donkey's ass in Benidorm.

I think not.

All in all, a loser. Any worthy accounts package will enable you to configure it to handle any business, including public houses and hotels, so *HAPHIAS* doesn't even score there.

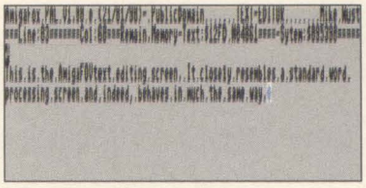
PC **35%**

AmigaFox (PD)

Amiga • Office Choice
Suite 14, Avon House, Town Centre, Cumbernauld G67 1EJ

I still can't work out why this freesville desktop publisher is named after the equestrian hunter's favourite quarry, but *AmigaFox* is nonetheless a good DTP package at a price that is very definitely right.

It's a German program but don't let that put you off. As Michael Wüst its author asserts, "I am German... just think about that fact if you see any mistakes, OK?" Fine.


This is the AmigaFXtext editing screen. It closely resembles a standard word processing screen and, indeed, behaves in much the same way.

***AmigaFox* is German, but don't let that put you off – it's a very good desktop publisher**

AmigaFox is divided into separate work areas. That is, there's a screen for text editing, another for graphics manipulation, yet another for printer set-up and so on. This gives the program an intuitive feel. It's just like the non-electronic publishing of the real world, where you would type text at a typewriter or word processor, transfer it to a drawing board, cut it up and and paste it down with scalpel and glue, gather pictures together and generally build the pages into a publication.

The program opens to the ubiquitous blank screen and blinking cursor. The default setting is text editing mode, and you can begin to type text into the new document immediately. Alternatively, by summoning the menu bar, you can import text from any other application which can generate standard ASCII. So, to create a document you either load or type text.

Obviously, publications require pictures and with *AmigaFox*, graphic import is a snip. Switch to the graphic editing screen and pull in your IFF. Once imported, pictures can be freely mixed with the text.

There's comprehensive on-line help for both text and graphic editing screens. The program handles proportional character sets, thousands of which are available from most PD libraries. A feature I particularly like is that the program multi-tasks to perfection, so that you can use a favourite word processor to generate the text or a suitable paint package for picture editing and switch between them and *AmigaFox* to continue publishing.

Solid, simple fare for Amiga-owning fanzine publishers everywhere.

AMIGA **65%**

Organise your life with an electronic appointment book

Almanac (Shareware)

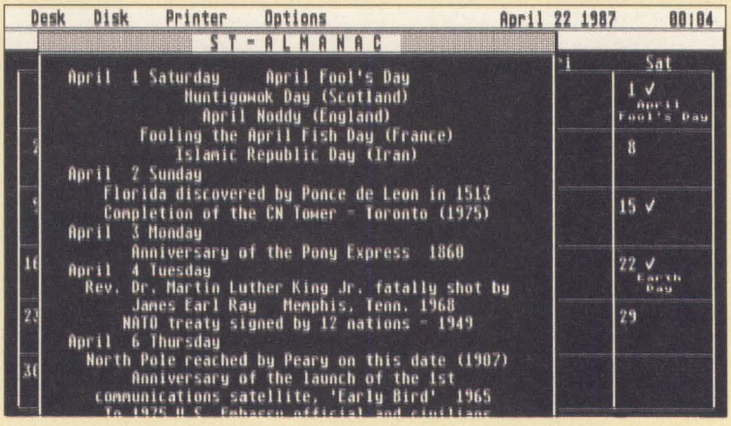
ST • AU-132 • Caledonia PDL
250 Oldtown Road, Hilton, Inverness IV2 4PT
☎ 0463 225736

Not an electronic rendition of the projected plan of world events as predicted by Nostradmus and his fortune-telling chums ("...hey guys, I've just had a *mega* idea! Let's screw up the twentieth century with a few phoney predictions, OK?"), but a comprehensive lifestyle planner for the look-ahead electro-phreak.

And what that means is that as well as straightforward day to day planning, the program is accompanied by extensive lists of important world dates past events, future public holidays – a comprehensive store of the dull but necessary ephemera of everyday living.

Almanac is Canadian and the information files reflect the fact with such unmissable snippets as Wayne Gretsky being nominated the World's Most Valued Hockey Player for the third year running.

Alamanc's screen is gridded like a standard wall planner. There's a menu bar giving access to the printer and previously saved configuration files, but most of the program's functions are accessed through a collection of buttons which run along the bottom of the screen. You can clear existing appointments, change the years, switch between day-planning and the almanac or summon trivia about the current day, month and year. There's also a 'Disk' button which provides a full quota of system functions including disk formatting, folder creation, file renaming and so on – just the kind of features you need from within a file-based program like this.


Desk Disk Printer Options April 22 1987 00:04
ST-ALMANAC
April 1 Saturday April Fool's Day
Huntigowk Day (Scotland)
April Noddy (England)
Fooling the April Fish Day (France)
Islamic Republic Day (Iran)
April 2 Sunday
Florida discovered by Ponce de Leon in 1513
Completion of the CN Tower - Toronto (1975)
April 3 Monday
Anniversary of the Pony Express 1860
April 4 Tuesday
Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. fatally shot by James Earl Ray Memphis, Tenn. 1968
NATO treaty signed by 12 nations - 1949
April 6 Thursday
North Pole reached by Peary on this date (1907)
Anniversary of the launch of the 1st communications satellite, 'Early Bird' 1965
Sat
1 ✓
April Fool's Day
8
15 ✓
22 ✓
Earth Day
29

If you ever wonder who in hell Ponce De Leon was, *Almanac*'s the fact-file to consult

What can be said about an electronic appointment book? It enables you store and manipulate appointments; it works – rather well – but you can't help feeling that it might be easier simply to pull out a battered notebook from the recesses of your anorak and jot down notes with a good-old user-friendly pencil. Still, if you've got a social calendar bettered only by the Queen's and you're looking for a useful task to set the ST to, *Almanac*-ing could be it.

ST **80%**

Forget full page printing – print letters line by line like a typewriter

LyneWriter (PD)

PC •BBS Download

When you committed hundreds of pounds to a computer system it meant that the machine had to cope with everything vaguely office-orientated that you could throw at it – including (and probably most importantly...) being a typewriter.

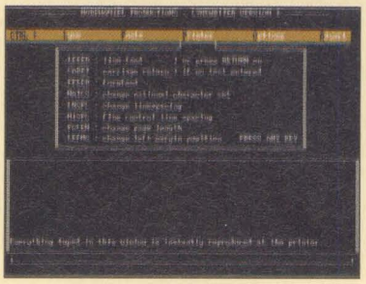
That's right. The PC moved in and the early electric Adler went straight out of the window. Fine. But for scores of businesses, hundreds of hours are wasted unravelling the unnecessary complexities of arcane word processing software. Sometimes ... well, it's difficult not to wish that the poor old typewriter was back in situ.

And you're in good company. Many computer users felt exactly the same. The problem caused one software house, Digita, to introduce a program which actually turned Atari's ST back into a simple typewriter.

And it *only* cost £70...

You, as a PC user, have it easy. *LyneWriter* (early mini-computer printers used to be called 'linewriters' because they printed a whole line of text at a time), lobotomises innocent PCs everywhere, turning them into an electronic version of the clanky mechanicals of yesteryear. *LyneWriter* however, doesn't cost a penny.

At it's simplest, the program provides a typing window on-screen



Banish those envelope-addressing and label-printing blues. Get *LyneWriter* up and running

which echoes everything you type to an attached and on-line printer. It's exactly like using a typewriter. Make a mistake and there's no backspace key to 'rub' it out. Decide to move a paragraph and you have to insert fresh paper into your printer and re-type the whole piece. But it does mean that there are no command sequences to learn, no control codes, no funny file formats, just plain and simple typed text. If that's what you want, that's what you get.

There is, however, another dimension to *LyneWriter*. Setting up a printer is notoriously difficult for beginners. Just getting the device to work with software *intended* for a printer is bad enough, but try to build a custom driver and many users are left weeping.

But using *LyneWriter*, printer set-up is a simple process of looking up the codes to initiate what it is you want to do in the printer's manual, and typing them into *Lyne*'s type window. Remember, everything you type is echoed at the printer, so by typing something which the device recognises as an instruction rather than straight text, you can step through all the features on offer – graphics modes, text effects and so on with ease.

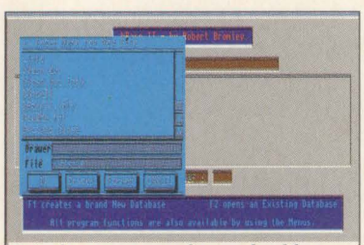
Now isn't that a good idea?

PC 75%

bBase II (PD)

Amiga • SPD

62 Manor Road, Hastings, East Sussex TN34 3LJ



A simple set-up, sweet front-end and fast sort routines sets *bBase* apart from the crowd

Second only to word processing, storing and manipulating data is what your computer was made for. Unfortunately, finding database software which takes advantage of the computer's aptitude is not an easy task. Sure, there are lots of databases, but have you used one lately?

If it's any good, then the price is hiked way up to the £100 mark, and as for the freebies, well, some of them should be stuffed into a sealed box, dumped into a darkened closet and quietly forgotten.

And that's why when a decent moolah-free data manipulator comes along, its praises must be shouted from the very roof-tops (OK, OK, maybe not, but *written* about, at least...)

bBase II is that database.

Set-up is simple. Press F1 to create a new database and you'll be prompted for a name. Specify the required number of fields, name 'em and you're up and running. To store data, hack it in!

All data is stored in RAM so operations are lightning fast. The program provides both incremental and decremental sorting and there's no disk update until you decide (...by pressing the F3 key). This means that you never have to wait for the program to perform some unwanted operation before getting on with what you want to do.

Sorting can be performed on any field too, and because it's so fast, you can sort the data on one field, print or otherwise extract the desired information, then sort on another to gain a different perspective.

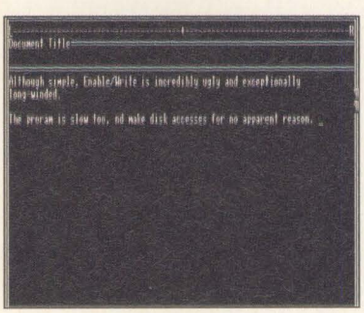
The program displays a deliciously crisp and simple screen. All the features are accessed from the menu bar but the function keys are used extensively as shortcuts. These are far easier to remember than the usual keyboard combinations, so even the raw novice will get their data house in order in no time at all.

Recommended.

AMIGA 75%

Enable/Write (PD)

Amiga • GAM302AM • Riverdene 30a School Road, Tilehurst, Reading, Berkshire RG53 5AN ☎ 0734 452416.


Document Title
Although simple, Enable/Write is incredibly ugly and exceptionally long-winded.
The program is slow too, and make disk accesses for no apparent reason.

Although it's designed to be the simplest text editor available, *Enable/Write* only succeeds as being one of the lousiest

Enable/Write is an attempt to create the world's simplest word processor for the Amiga.

To that end, all the program's control functions have been separated out so that to access menus, for example, you switch to a separate screen rather than pressing the right mouse key. Mouse control has been exchanged for the 'arrows' cluster at the right of the keyboard, and function keys are used to summon help or – combined with ALT and ESC – choose options.

An interactive tutorial introduces *Enable/Write* to the raw beginner but because it's written as a script, the screen is constantly flashing and jumping around as the machine frantically reads and organises the next text module – alarming stuff for the novice!

Enable/Write's authors, the Software Group, suggests that its alleged ease of use can be attributed to the 'natural' way the program works, and that in operation, it behaves just like a typewriter.

Sure, but if I'd wanted a simple typewriter, I'd have bought a red, plastic Petite. £400 rewarded me with the most sophisticated 16-bit silicon money can buy and when I fill that silicon with software, I want it to be stretched to the limits, not lobotomised.

It's an honest attempt, but a misguided one. A simple word processor consists of an uncluttered screen, plenty of easily-accessible menus and lashings of on-line help, not unnecessary keystrokes (ALT-F9 and then the number of the help option you want to read... I ask you), separate screens for menus and typing, and cursor-key control instead of the mouse. And *that* name! Sorry guys, but it's back to the coding bench...

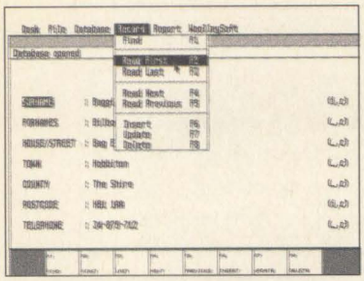
AMIGA 35%

cont. on p60

cont. from p59

DataStore V1.2 (Shareware)

ST • WooleySoft
Humblesknowe Cottage, Ramoyle, Dunblane, Perthshire, Scotland FK15 0BA



***DataStore* is another quality database for the ST. Fully-featured and – almost – free**

There was a time when computer enthusiasts struggled to maintain club lists, catalogues of stamps, beer mats and train numbers on 16K ZX81s and imagined themselves operating at the cutting edge of technology.

Today, those same pioneer databasers have the kind of choice only experienced by a naked Barry Manilow offered a roomful of middle-aged mothers.

There's a commercial database to handle anything you would ever want to catalogue and more, and plenty of PD inventory programs designed to handle specific items such as videos, records, CDs and the like.

However, fully-featured general-purpose database programs from the public domain are pretty thin on the ground and many of those available fall somewhat short of complete usability. Except, perhaps, *DataStore*.

This shareware general list generator is simple to set up and use and ever-so-slightly powerful. But first, that set-up procedure. I love to mess around with database programs – all that delicious and definable data available for manipulation at the slightest key-press and click. I guess it's a peculiarly 20th century form of voyeurism. You can look – manipulate, even – without getting involved. The computer does all the dirty work and all you have to do is insert and extract, and all at arm's length.

But the one thing guaranteed to put me off the stroke with any database is the set-up procedure. I don't wanna know about records, fields and files, you know? I don't want to have to calculate how many records I might need before I've even started to keep the goddamn database, and how in hell am I supposed to know whether at some point in the future I might want to include numerical data in a normally character-based field?

All I want to do is name the fields (I'll concede to that much...), hack in the data and start keeping tabs on my nearest and dearest.

DataStore is one of the simplest databases I've ever had to set up. Even the phrase 'set up' is over-stating what is, in fact, little more than a naming of fields. *And* the operation is performed in an unfussy window which is a pleasure to look at and use.

DataStore provides excellent report generation facilities too. You can choose headings, select a page length, elect to print a condensed or verbose description and so much more. In addition, *DataStore* handles multiple open databases (seven), sophisticated searching and sorting and *1st Word*-style buttons along the bottom of the screen, each with an assigned function key shortcut.

All in all, probably the best £7 you'll ever spend on data manipulation (...and electronic peeping Tommery!)

ST 75%

Supplement your spreadsheets with this handy bag of tricks

GoalSeeker (Shareware)

PC • Brown Bag Software
2155 South Bascom Avenue, Suite 114, Campbell, CA 95008
☎ 0101 408 559 4545

Brown Bag comes up trumps again with another of its remarkably simple yet effective ideas to increase PC productivity. This time it's with *GoalSeeker*, a dinky little spreadsheet overlay which significantly extends the range of functions available to you from within your favourite cell-orientated software.

As anyone who is even vaguely familiar with the world of high finance knows, goal seeking is the process of setting up a required target and coercing the data into a suitable configuration to match that target. Lost? Well, you're not alone. The bread-heads have a language all their own, but it may help if you think of goal seeking as simply running your spreadsheet backwards!

Since spreadsheets became available, users have found their ability to predict the future incredibly useful. Alter one column of data – say, stock levels for December – and it's possible to ascertain whether or not you're going to be profitable for the month or about to make a loss in a big way. Unfortunately, with a fixed goal in mind and the desire to know how to achieve it, you'd have to break out traditional methods such as paper and pencil and do the figuring by hand.

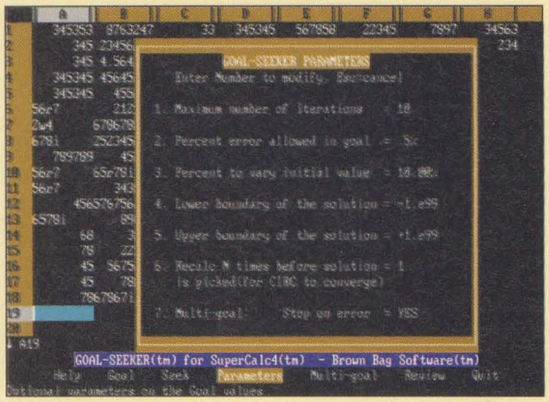
Not any more. *GoalSeeker* works in an ingenious way. You run your everyday spreadsheet application, and it pops a menu bar up over the top whenever the key-combination is issued (ALT-Spacebar). From then on in, goal seeking is a simple matter of informing the jinky little utility what it is you want to find. Within minutes, *GoalSeeker* varies the associated data from the spreadsheet to produce a result.

The program works with Lotus, *SuperCalc*, *MultiPlan* and *VP Planner*, supports monochrome or CGA displays (every PC on the planet) and requires only a 40K overhead.

Brown Bag seems to have a terrific knack of discovering just what it is PC owners most need and then meeting that need. At $25 dollars (that's around £15 for those of you without a copy of the *Financial Times* handy) it's affordable to all but the meanest business, and a simple fax with your flexible friend's number etched upon it will register your copy.

Well, whaddaya waitin' for?

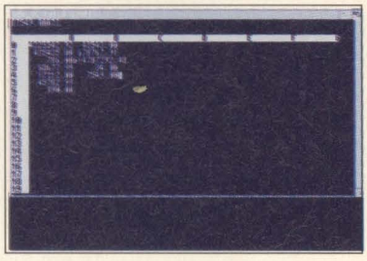
PC 90%



ALT-Spacebar and Hey Presto! Up pops *GoalSeeker*, ready to work backwards so that you can step into the future

VisiCalc (PD)

Amiga • 957 • Canhams Leisure Software
☎ 0908 274819



Who needs the Science Museum now that *VisiCalc* is available as PD for the Amiga?

That's right, kids! The spreadsheet that started it all is waiting right there on your Amiga. Cell-based software that nonplussed the money-grubbers of the northern hemisphere is now available free, gratis and for nuthin'. Forget an arm and a leg, the price tag attached to this baby once required an entire mortuary of fleshy spare parts to transport it home to the safety of your disk drive.

What's all the fuss about? Well, for the benefit of the under-35s, those interested in manipulating financial facts and formulae prior to *Visicalc* sat down with a pencil and a four-function calculator and figured it out for themselves. The process was exceptionally tedious and required great concentration if mistakes were to be avoided.

And then someone thought that it might be a good idea to put the untamed 32K power of the emerging microcomputers to good use by entrusting the dibs data to them. Thus, *Visicalc* was born. Good news for the mind-boggled merchant bankers of the day, and exceptionally good news for the microcomputer creators – it's generally acknowledged that the amazing success of the Apple microcomputer was due entirely to the spreadsheet that spawned them all.

Appetite good and whetted? Well, you're gonna be disappointed. Despite the big build up, *Visicalc* is a bit of a

cont. p3

CITIZEN

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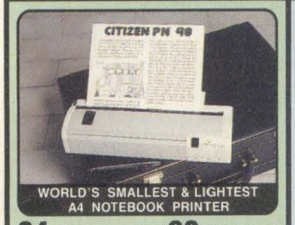

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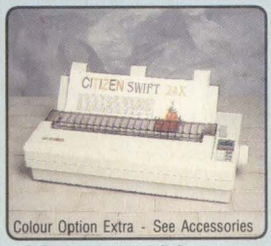

Colour Option Extra - See Accessories

192 CPS **136** COLUMN

- *Citizen Swift 24x - 24 pin - 136 column*
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E&OE - Advertised prices and specifications may change - Please return the coupon for the latest information.

cont. from p60

non-runner in today's financial forecasting stakes. Oh sure, the program works very well, but it's as basic as basic can be, and then some.

So why the rave review? Because here's your chance to hold in the hand a little piece of computing history. The Amiga's always had that ground-breaking slightly 'alternative' aura surrounding it and that's what attracts many owners. *Visicalc* has the very same aura.

All that, and if you want simple spreadsheeting, it'll do that too. Get a copy while they're still going...

AMIGA **45%**

mCalc (Shareware)

PC • D Morton, 148 Trotwood, Limes Farm, Chigwell, Essex IG7 5JW

...and just in case you actually *need* an ASCII table, *mCalc* provides it. Everything to replace *Sidekick*, and at a fraction of the price...

Dunno 'bout you, but on my PC, *Sidekick* is the pop-up hostess with mostest. Calendar, ASCII table, text editor and that luscious little calculator. When the Casio at the cutting edge of sun-driven technology fades to grey in the dim office light, *Sidekick* comes up trumps.

Sidekick however, in common with most commercial software, costs a packet, and, let's face it, how many times do you actually need an ASCII table? Now maybe if you could get hold of just the calculator...

Enter *mCalc*. This baby would bamboozle Einstein, there are so many features. But for those who just want to tot up three cross doubles and a treble (I temped at Mecca as a student), *mCalc* does the biz.

The program runs as a TSR (Terminate Stay Resident). That is, you install it in memory from the command line, then summon it by pressing ALT. (ie Alt then full stop). And what *that* equates to is that you can summon *mCalc* from within a favourite application such as *WordStar*, perform some slight sum or other and quit back to the word processing without so much as dropping a dotted 'i'.

Number conversions are as simple as blinking (hex, dec and binary). You can also use parentheses nesting up to 20 levels, logic operators and a comprehensive selection of functions including sin, cos, tan, log and more.

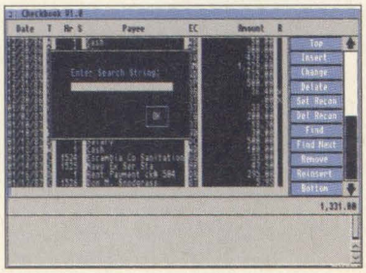
In addition, there's an on-line help feature so that even the wildest electro-duffer can enumerate with the best of 'em! *mCalc* works with every application I could throw at it, doesn't interfere with other TSRs and is simple to remove should you want to reclaim its memory. And if that weren't enough you get a whole host of other useful goodies if you pay the £20 registration fee.

Utterly useful. Get one.

PC **80%**

Bank'n (Shareware)

Amiga • 957 • Canhams Leisure Software
☎ 0908 274819



Financial double-dealing is just a click away. *Bank'n* features a super tree structure and comprehensive on-line help

Every small business person knows that juggling bank accounts to meet the needs of VAT offices, bank managers, spouses and the like usually requires more mental dexterity than it's possible maintain. So what better use for the Amiga than to make it watch over your bank roll?

Bank'n is the perfect bank account manager. Whereas other programs in the genre go overboard in their attempts at self-justification, *Bank'n* has no pretensions, makes no apologies. It simply looks after any number of your cheque accounts by enabling you to store every transaction, total them and generate reports.

The program opens to blank screen and a single option on the menu bar. Selecting this produces a menu from which you can access all the features of the program. The entire thing follows a tree-like organisation. Each item in the menu provides another menu with several options. This ensures that there's no searching hither and thither for a particular function – simply follow the tree until you come upon it.

As well as the mandatory account setting-up menu (featuring simple fields to specify account name and number, current balance and the like...), there are menu options to generate reports (abbreviated or comprehensive), manage cheque-books, perform queries on the database and generate an end-of-year report – just the thing when your accountant is hassling *you* because the representative from the Inland Revenue is hassling *him* or *her*.

Probably the best on-line help I've yet seen has its own menu entry, and selecting this steps one branch further down the tree to a complete help breakdown on everything the program is capable of performing.

All the features are intuitive and

cont. p6

Spread those sheets – computerised bed-making

Opus (Shareware)

ST • Softville, Unit 5, Stratfield Park, Elletra Avenue, Waterlooville, Hants PO7 7XN
☎ 0705 266509

There are just two usable spreadsheets available for the ST and *Sheet* is the other one.

For some strange reason, *Sheet* is widely available from PD libraries, bulletin boards, virtually everywhere in fact, while *Opus* languishes in *Sheet*'s shadow. This is rather a pity, because the latest version, 2.2, is one the most powerful spreadsheet and charting applications you'll find anywhere, and that includes commercial sources.

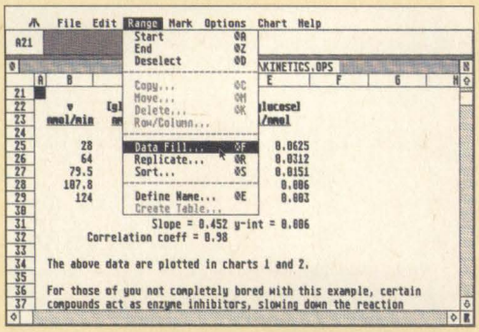
Spreadsheets have come a long way since the early 'sum cell A1 with cell B2' days. Hot on the heels of the likes of *SuperCalc* and *Visicalc*, Lotus and its many clones provided rudimentary database and graphics facilities and an increased mathematical function range. Lotus was the second generation of spreadsheets, what about the third?

Double-click *Opus*.

That's right, cell-shufflers, *Opus* is a true third generation spreadsheet right there on your ST. An extended function range? *Opus* offers *81* different mathematical functions including trigonometry, statistics, probability, financial and even date and time formulae as well as the all-important regression. And each function is further divided into a complete range of sub-functions to cover every need.

As well as comprehensive maths functions, *Opus* presents a fully-featured text editor for simple cell editing, comprehensive block-manipulation selected using the mouse, data fill from a specified starting point and full indexing of cells so that you can use the program as a sophisticated non-dedicated database. Oh, and there's a macro-like search and replace language too, so that all the figures are at your fingertips instantly.

And when you've entered all the data, correlated all the



Little known outside PD library owners, *Opus* is nothing less than a spreadsheeting symphony!

statistics and sorted cells to you heart's content, *Opus* offers easy-to-use charting so that you can really see what's going on with all your valuable data.

Opus provides a level of sophistication only dreamed about by business users of the early 80s and it's available to you for less than a tenner – well, whaddaya waitin' for?

ST **90%**

PC XT NOTEBOOK

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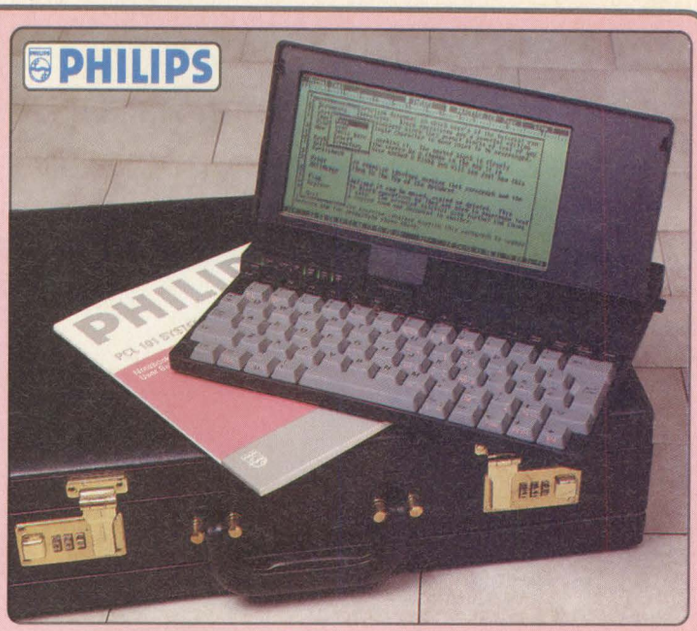

SPECIFICATIONS

- 80C86 10MHz PROCESSOR
- BUILT-IN 3½" 1.44Mb DISK DRIVE
- 1Mb RAM
- SOFTWARE - RESIDENT: MS-DOS 3.3 IN ROM
- SOFTWARE - SUPPLIED: GW-BASIC 3.22, MICROSOFT WORKS 2.0
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- POWER - MAINS & BATTERY: 4 RECHARGEABLE NI-CAD CELLS. POWER MANAGEMENT GIVES APPROX 3 HOURS OPERATING TIME
- DIMENSIONS (W×D×H): 11"×8⅔"×1"
- WEIGHT: 3¾lbs
- OPTIONAL: ADDITIONAL RECHARGEABLE BATTERY PACKS

The super-compact Philips PCL 101 Notebook, takes up less surface area than an A4 page, weighs just 3¾lbs, is just over 1" thick, yet only costs £449+VAT. The PCL 101 is fast (10MHz CPU) with 1Mb RAM and a 1.44Mb, 3½" standard floppy disk drive.

The easy to read LCD CGA screen measures just 3½"×7½" and displays crisp, clear characters and sharp graphics at CGA resolution (640×200 pixels). The keyboard has 80 full size, full travel keys with 12 separate function keys, emulating a full-size industry standard keyboard.

Industry standard serial, parallel and external monitor ports, are all included. Power can be supplied from the mains via an auto-sensing, multi-voltage adaptor and charger, or by a Ni-Cad battery pack that snaps flush into the main body case. With its sophisticated power management, the battery lasts for about 3 hours (and takes 4 hours to recharge). The PCL 101 offers automatic audio 'battery low' warnings, to help ensure that you never lose any valuable data.

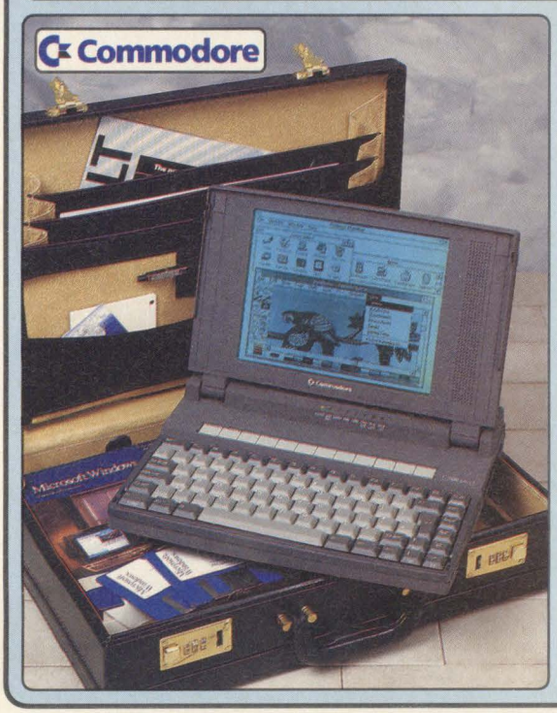
PACKAGE INCLUDES

- MS-DOS 3.3
- GW-Basic 3.22
- Microsoft Works 2.0
- PSU/Battery Charger
- Protective Pouch
- 1 Year On-Site Warranty

£449

REF: NBC 7101 +VAT = £527.58

286 + 386 PC AT NOTEBOOKS



- **BUILT-IN VGA DISPLAY**
- **20Mb HARD DRIVE**
- **6 HOUR BATTERY LIFE**
- **1Yr ON-SITE WARRANTY**
- **WINDOWS 3 + MOUSE**
- **TEXTURED CASING**

In stylish grey casing with a non-slip, textured finish and using the very latest technology, Commodore's 286-LT and 386sx-LT Notebooks are available from Silica at incredibly low prices.

Both models have a 20Mb hard disk, 1Mb RAM, expandable to 5Mb RAM using two 2Mb RAM cards, a 3½" 1.44Mb floppy disk drive and industry standard parallel and serial ports to allow connection to a wide range of printers, mice, modems and LAN adaptors.

Bright, backlit LCD screens display VGA graphics at 640×480 resolution, with a port to plug in a colour VGA monitor to show the graphics full potential.

These compact Notebooks weigh just over 5.9 lbs (7 lbs with battery) and measure 12¼"×10"×2". They can be powered from the mains, via the multi-voltage mains adaptor, or by their own batteries, which can be recharged while in use, or independently in approximately one hour. Commodore's Powersave feature increases battery life to up to 6 hours and, along with optional rechargeable battery packs, gives you continuous PC power on the move!

SPECIFICATIONS

	286	386
PROCESSOR	286	386sx
CLOCK SPEED	12MHz	16MHz
LANDMARK (MHz)	11.5	21
1Mb RAM EXPANDABLE TO 5Mb	●	●
2Mb RAM UPGRADE	£299	£299
20Mb 23ms HARD DISK DRIVE	●	●
VGA GRAPHICS - Res: 640×480	●	●
3½" 1.44Mb FLOPPY DISK DRIVE	●	●
PARALLEL, SERIAL & VGA PORTS	●	●
UP TO 6 HOURS BATTERY LIFE	●	●
1 YEAR ON-SITE WARRANTY	●	●
WINDOWS 3.0 + MOUSE	●	●
MS-DOS 4.01 + GW-BASIC	●	●
80387sx CO-PROCESSOR UPGRADE	—	£279

286 WITH 20Mb HDD

£899

+VAT = £1056.33

40Mb HARD DRIVE VERSION - £1099

386sx WITH 20Mb HDD

£1099

+VAT = £1291.33

40Mb HARD DRIVE VERSION - £1299

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Address: .....

.....

.....

Postcode: ..... Tel: .....

Which computer(s), if any, do you own? 70B

cont. from p62

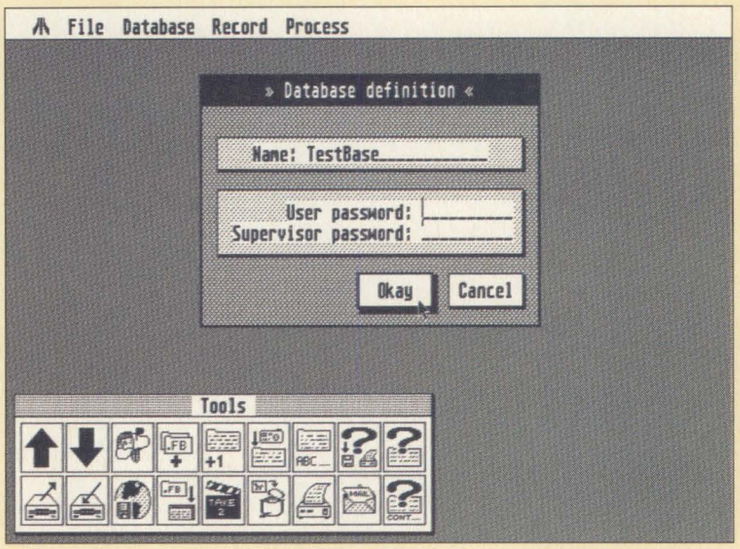
Pssst, what's the password? Powerful databases that can be protected

FastBase (Shareware)

ST • AU-130 • Caledonia PDL
250 Oldtown Road, Hilton,
Inverness IV2 4PT
☎ 0463 225736

It always happens. Award some application or other a glowing review and within a half dozen pages you'll discover another one which blows the first away and has you frantically scrabbling round for superlatives to describe it. Such an application is *FastBase*.

It's obvious you're onto something a bit good after the first double-click. As the program opens, a dinky little tool-box appears in the bottom left corner of the screen, stuffed with deliciously drawn icons. A quick scan of the menu bar reveals Mac-like sub-menus rarely found outside Apple's financially remote silicon, and by the time you've actually selected an option, marvelled at the helpful menu prompts in the top right of the monitor (...a la *Calamus*), it's a short step to believing that *FastBase* is probably the best database program ever bowled to we of the 'almost free' brigade.



Two levels of passwords ensure that *FastBase* data is totally secure (and look at that tool-box!)

Sure, titilating extras do not an expansive application make, but let's face it, if a programmer bothers to generate extras like those mentioned above, you can be pretty sure that they have also bothered to write a decent application to go with 'em!

Has *FastBase* got the muscle to back-up its pretty-boy image? You'd better believe it. Up to 22 open databases at once, each with as many 200 field records as your ST's RAM will enable multi-back-ups (user-defined), two layers of password access, all the popular graphics formats supported including *Degas*, IMG, TINY and so on, GDOS support and relational querying. It works in all screen resolutions, on everything from a 520ST to a machine with the biggest memory expansion board hard-earned dosh can muster.

The program's stuffed to overflowing with nice little features such as the intelligent field formatting. You can select from a large range of pre-specified field types including currency, percentage, scientific and suffix (up to10 trailing characters). There is also layered password protection, so that even at the lowest level users can enter the password and browse the data file, but they're not allowed to change data; while entering the database at Supervisor level (with a suitable password) enables full editing of the database to take place.

Roget hangs limp in my hand after the mother of all superlative searches so suffice to say that you can't do better than get a copy of *FastBase*, OK?

ST 93%

the coding is as smooth as Emma Freud's inner thigh. A super program, and just the thing for those with a desperate need to order their finances but no dosh to buy suitable software (It'll only set you back about £6)!

AMIGA 80%

Nag (Shareware)

Amiga • 481 • Canhams
Leisure Software
☎ 0908 274819

Everyone forgets important events. Birthdays, meetings, interviews, all come and go and it's not until we're in deep dung, that we remember where we should have been or what we should have been doing. *Nag* gets around the problem by popping up on your computer screen at salient moments to remind you of important events.

Forget the Gruenberg hook method, *Nag* uses the technology of tomorrow to remind you of

Using on-screen prompts, digitised sound samples or the Amiga's built-in speech capabilities, *Nag* does just as its name implies: nags you every 30 seconds until action is taken (usually, reaching for the on-off switch).

Setting up the program is a breeze. Using a favourite word processor or the program's in-built text editing abilities, you construct custom schedules. Stored on a boot disk, *Nag* will then install itself in RAM when the machine is switched on.

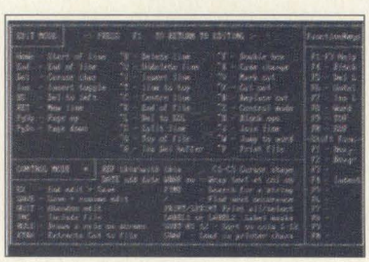
You can see a list of impending events or summon a calendar at any time by clicking on *Nag*'s tiny icon. And with the calendar on-screen, clicking a date enables you to edit any associated events.

Effective and, when used with assorted sound samples of speech, it's lots of fun too!

AMIGA 75%

Ed (PD)

PC • BBS Download



Simple and uncluttered, *Ed* enables you to get on with the word processing while forgetting the complex instruction manuals

Ed is touted by its author Barry Gilpin as a 'quiet' text editor, and after using it, you know just where the man Baz is comin' from. Whereas many word processors are fussier than Arthur offered anything but Katomeat, *Ed* provides a fully-featured screen-editing environment that requires nothing more from the user than what you want to type in. The unexpected is *not* a part of *Ed*'s repertoire.

It's obvious you're into something dead good on the first page of the electronic manual. The opening instructions detail not opening files, not saving files, nor yet doing *anything* with files, but simply, how to quit. How many hours have you spent frantically tapping at the Escape, Control-C or Control-X keys to quit some dreadful shareware package you'd evaluated and rejected? Right!

Other little touches like the manual being written in such a way that each subject fits into one screen with a 'Press PgDn Key' message at the bottom. This gives studying it an aura of intelligence, because as you assimilate the information, there's no need to scroll lines back and fore to keep track. And it shows that the Gilpin has you, the ultimate users of the program, at heart.

OK, enough of the manual already, but you get the idea? *Ed* displays a simple, uncluttered screen with positional markers, time and date, the number of lines in the current file and so on. To use the program, start typing. On-line help can be summoned at any time by pressing F1.

Navigating a document is as easy as using the cursor, page up and down, Home and End keys, and there are search and replace functions that cater for even the most heavy word processing requirements.

Sure, there's no indexing, table-of-

contents generation or on-line spell-checking, so if it's the definitive first novel you're working on then look elsewhere, but for all those dinky little notes, letters to bank managers and tryst arrangements generated day in day out in most offices, look to *Ed*.

PC 65%

Double Sentry Accounts (Shareware)

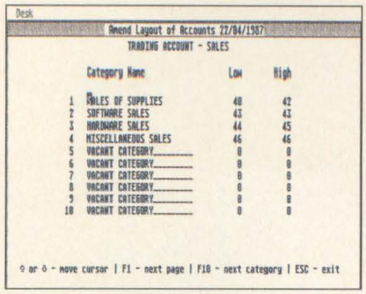
ST • Softville
Unit 5, Stratfield Park, Elletra Avenue, Waterlooville, Hants PO7 7XN
☎ 0705 266509

The quality of what makes it into the public domain makes me shiver. Like, some guy spends months – perhaps *years* – writing and perfecting the definitive accounting package just to give it away or exchange it for the *tiniest* of shareware donations.

Such a program is *Double Sentry Accounts*. I feel guilty just using it, like the forces of FAST (the Federation of Software Theft no less) are about to break down my door after copying and booting it; it's so good, you feel there must be some mistake and that it's really distributed by Signa Publishing or someone and has a price tag to match.

DSA comes in two flavours: the slightly cut-down public domain version which is a fully-functioning accounting package minus the VAT routines; and a shareware offering that features the absent purchase tax code.

Once run *Double Sentry* begins with the inevitable set-up procedure. There's a separate program to handle data-file configuration. This enables you to specify how many nominal, sales and purchase accounts you want to use. You can define up to 9,999 individual accounts for each category.


Desk
Amend Layout of Accounts 22/04/1987
TRADING ACCOUNT - SALES
Category Name
Low
High
1 SALES OF SUPPLIES 40 42
2 SOFTWARE SALES 43 43
3 HARDWARE SALES 44 45
4 MISCELLANEOUS SALES 46 46
5 VACANT CATEGORY 0 0
6 VACANT CATEGORY 0 0
7 VACANT CATEGORY 0 0
8 VACANT CATEGORY 0 0
9 VACANT CATEGORY 0 0
10 VACANT CATEGORY 0 0
↑ or ↓ - move cursor | F1 - next page | F10 - next category | ESC - exit

***Double Sentry Accounts* displays all its accounts data in an easily digestable format**

After entering the company name and one or two other bits of information, save the configuration and quit. It's now time to start the program proper.

Double Sentry adheres to the GEM way of doing things, making monetary manipulation a breeze! All the program's functions are accessed from the menu bar so there's only a limited learning curve before you're using the program like a pro.

To speed things up, *DSA* holds all the data in RAM. When you update an account, the new data is written to the relevant disk file and also stored in memory. This equates to breath-taking data access speed. No need to worry about miniature RAM quotients limiting your data either. On a Mega ST with hard drive, you can store up to 45,000 entries, and even a floppy-based 520ST can cope with 600 – sufficient for the needs of many small businesses.

It's when generating reports that *DSA* really comes into its own. A few years ago, inky-fingered accountants grubbed about for days generating profit and loss and trial balance reports. With *Sentry*, you simply pull down the relevant menu and click an option. Seconds later, the desired information appears on the screen or (Epson compatible) printer. And that's the way accounting *should* work – without fuss!

The READ.ME file accompanying the PD *DSA* advises that users of the PD version don't attempt to hack the program to insert those missing VAT routines. As *DSA*'s author Graham Hutcheon asserts "...anyone using the program seriously enough to need the VAT routines...should be encouraged to part with a few spondulicks (£25 to be exact) to support a starving author..."

Right on, kids!

ST 85%

U kick it, I'll head it. No, I'll kick it and Uedit!

Uedit (Shareware)

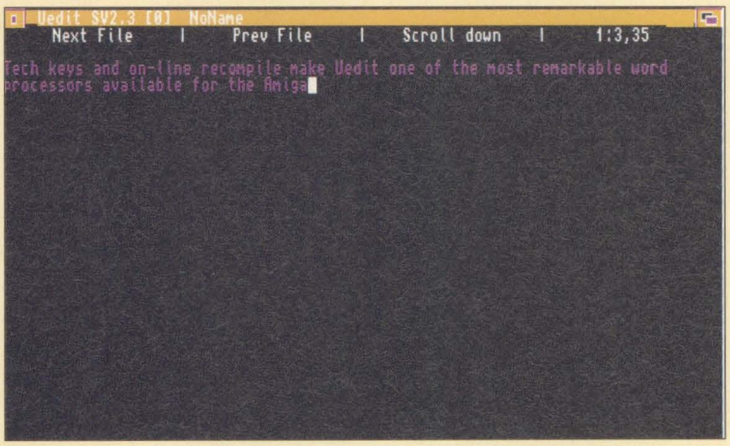
Amiga • 691 • Canhams Leisure Software
☎ 0908 274819

Uedit is a word processor with a big difference: simple word processing for even the most hardened techno-phobe, coupled with the most amazing flexibility you'll find in an Amiga application.

Flexibility? Yep, because not only is *Uedit* a super word processor, but it's designed to be changed to match the exact needs of its users. You can rewrite any part of *Uedit*, redesign menus, dialogues, the screen display, anything! And not only that, but you can perform these wondrous rewrites while the program is *up and running*!

At its most basic, *Uedit* is an everyday word processor with the right features to help it stand out from the crowd. As well as some very nice search and replace routines, *Uedit* supports macros in the form of learning keys. Select the function, and as you type, the program remembers the key sequence. Name the sequence and you've got a macro. The method is far better than attempting to build macros off-line, and helps to keep mistakes to a minimum.

Indexing is still in its infancy on the Amiga, but using *Uedit*, it's as simple as clicking the word to select it from the index. Issuing the Index command instructs the program to generate a perfectly-indented and numbered index. Combined with a decent desktop publishing package, book publishing is but a click away...


Uedit SV2.3 [0] NoName
Next File | Prev File | Scroll down | 1:3,35
Tech keys and on-line recompile make Uedit one of the most remarkable word processors available for the Amiga

***Uedit*: Powerful word processing with a plus: if you don't like it, recompile it! Mould yourself your own custom text editor to suit your own (and your Amiga's) needs**

Uedit also supports access to AmigaDOS from within the program, so you can format disks, move and delete files and so on, without ever closing the current document. Column handling, superior cut and paste, justification, page formatting and a thousand and one keyboard shortcuts round off what could rapidly become your favourite word processor.

But it's that rewrite facility which makes *Uedit* so interesting. Not only does the program allow itself to be redesigned, its author, Rick Stiles, actively encourages you to do so by enabling you to recompile the program *on the fly*. All you have to do is type in the code construction and press the F10 key. *Uedit* recognises this construction as a control string and compiles it, so that it actually becomes part of the program!

A powerful word processor for under £30, it's perfect for those with custom requirements.

AMIGA 90%

Business Card Maker (PD)

Amiga • 056 Canhams Leisure Software ☎ 0908 274819

Ugly, primitive and slow, yet *Business Card Maker* is one of kind and remarkably effective

The business card has become an indispensable addition to the inner pockets of the average business person. Makes 'em feel like they've got an identity, that they're *someone*. Trouble is, having those cards printed isn't cheap, and trying to cut corners

cont. on p66

cont. from p64

Go for the hard sell with impressive presentations without the price

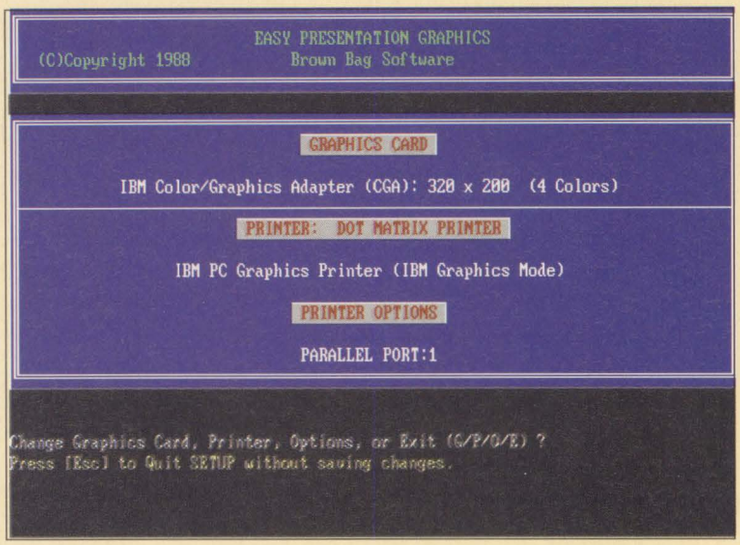
Easy Presentation Graphics (Shareware)

PC •Brown Bag Software
2155 South Bascom Avenue, Suite 114, Campbell, CA 95008
☎ 0101 408 559 4545

A year or two ago, it seemed like you couldn't turn around without some guy in a Next suit and Armani tie stuffing presentation graphics into your face and Paco Raban up both nostrils.

Thankfully, the days of presentation graphics as an indispensable weapon in the salesman's armoury-for-the-ignorant have almost passed by, but the need for quality and easy-to-manipulate graphics is still as strong as ever. If you have information to convey, there's no better way than with a funky little display of coloured lights on your PC; remember the adage about a picture being worth a thousand words?

And besides, even in these days of automated *everything*, it's still easy to bamboozle the mugs with an animated computer display. Seems strange, but punters are very definitely impressed by a few simple bar graphs, pie charts and the like, as long as they're in 3D, full colour, and appear on a computer screen. Constructing these exciting (sic) graphical displays, however, is not always that simple. Enter *Easy Presentation Graphics* from Brown Bag Software from California.


EASY PRESENTATION GRAPHICS
(C)Copyright 1988 Brown Bag Software
GRAPHICS CARD
IBM Color/Graphics Adapter (CGA): 320 x 200 (4 Colors)
PRINTER: DOT MATRIX PRINTER
IBM PC Graphics Printer (IBM Graphics Mode)
PRINTER OPTIONS
PARALLEL PORT:1
Change Graphics Card, Printer, Options, or Exit (G/P/O/E) ?
Press [Esc] to Quit SETUP without saving changes.

By selecting from a comprehensive range of charts and graphs, combining colour and adding pictures, you too can create stunning presentation graphics (the set-up's simple too!)

What Bag's little snippet attempts to do is to provide an interface between you, the graphics and the computer. That is, you tell the program what to do and it takes care of the machine code-orientated dirty work.

EPG works on almost all PCs from 512K, CGA-based machines upwards (although you do need at least two floppy drives). The main program is accompanied by a set-up utility to tailor *EPG* to your system. There are also dozens of printer drivers covering practically every dot matrix and low-end laser in the cosmos!

Using the program-proper is as easy as blinking. Run the program, choose the type of graphs to include in the presentation (pie, bar, doughnut, line, deviation, percentage and so on), select colours, name the graphics you want to import, instruct the program where you want to put frames, and so on.

Get the idea? You're presented with lists of presentation-type objects, and you select those you want to include. When you have a suitable set-up, save the configuration and run the presentation.

EPG is just the thing for all those who need to impress with the power of personal computing, but don't know a keyboard from a CPU, all for a registration fee of less than £50.

PC 80%

by using those frightful machines at post offices, produces something that looks like it was turned out by a nursery group given five minutes with John Bull's Printing Kit.

The author of *Business Card Maker* suffered the same problems and decided to do something about it. The result is a little program written in Amiga BASIC which facilitates the construction and printing of the executive's passport, but at a fraction of the cost of commercial operations.

BCM looks for all the world like a direct port from the Commodore 64. It's slow and clunky and features the most appalling clicking and buzzing sound effects. Strangely however, it works rather well.

The program provides a scaled-up card on an otherwise blank screen. To begin creating, select a font from the menu bar, position a cursor on the card and start typing. Graphics can be imported from most paint packages, and the program provides a range of pre-defined cards for you to copy and alter.

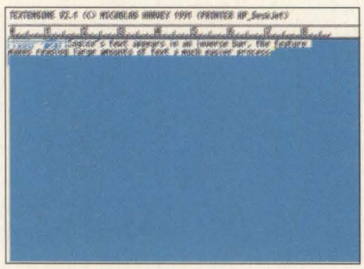
Near Letter Quality (NLQ) printing is supported and there are drivers for all the popular printers including generic-IBM, Panasonic and the all-important Epson FX series.

Useful, simple to use, and remarkably effective.

AMIGA 70%

Text Engine (Shareware)

Amiga • 1401 • 17-Bit Software PO Box 97, Wakefield WF1 1XX
☎ 0924 366982



Text Engine's sleep mode lets you play with Workbench and return to writing at any time

Summer 1990 for Nicholas Harvey was spent in the fruitless pursuit of word processing priced at less than a £100. Our boy scoured magazine ads but could find nothing his meagre funds would stretch to. Shagged out, he decided instead to write his own word processor, and the result is *Text Engine 2.1*, a simple but reasonably-featured editor which can be had for the ubiquitous fiver.

Text Engine opens with an almost perfect word processing screen. No clutter, no outsized messages of self-congratulation from the author, just a well-drawn tab comb across the top of the screen, one *tiny* copyright message and an indication of the current printer driver.

Start typing and the first thing you'll notice is that text appears in an inverse bar. That is, as you type, a white bar moves across the screen beneath the letters. It's as irritating as hell at first, but get several paragraphs into a large document and the logic behind this feature suddenly becomes apparent. Everything is *so* clear. No more, the frantic scrabbling for the cursor if your eyes are distracted from the document for a moment. And reading back what you've written from the screen becomes – almost – a pleasure. And that's good for you, and wonderful for all those trees you'll save by not dumping the file to a printer every two minutes to check what you've written.

One very nice feature is the sleep mode. Pull down the Project menu and select Sleep (or use the keyboard shortcut...) and you're dumped out onto the Workbench. *Text Engine* frees up a large chunk of RAM and slips into electronic catalepsy, giving you free reign over the system. To return to the editing, click the inoffensive Cancel gadget at the top of the screen. The program returns instantly.

Macros, word counting, full search and replace, line centering and text styling all help to make *Text Engine* even more desirable.

It's often a little difficult to describe *yet* another word processor, but with *Text Engine*, there's no problem. It's so clear and clean, you're positively encouraged to use it for writing – and that's the best that can be said of any word processor.

AMIGA 86%

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Mousemania

Cursing those cursor keys? Is it a case of hard cheese if you want to use a Graphical User Interface? What you need is a mouse. Jason Saunders gives a few pointers on pointing devices...

Have you ever been in the situation where you're keying in a 3,000-word document and wanted to scan for a sentence that you've already typed? If you have, you'll have probably run into a phenomenon called cursorphobia. This is where you hold your finger down on one of the arrow keys to scroll though the text. Then you realise that as soon as the text you want appears and you release the button the screen carries on scrolling until you're about three pages before where you want to be.

Sounds bad enough? Then try drawing a diagonal line using just the cursor or arrow key. It'll probably end up looking like one half of a swastika. What you need is a device that follows the movement of your hand, whether in a simple diagonal line or a curve, and that makes searching through text a doddle. And thankfully there are such devices. They

Documented evidence

Even though the PC user may have to spend more on a mouse on average than their Amiga and ST counterparts, they do win out in one respect. All the mice we reviewed for the Amiga and ST came with little more than one paragraph of instructions, usually something along the lines of: set the switch according to your computer and plug it in.

The PC mice all came with manuals. These not only informed the user how to install the required software – and let's face it, with the PC being the complicated beast that it is, who would expect anything less – but also how to care for their mouse. These may well be simple measures, but they can extend the life of the mouse.

Every mouse must be cleaned regularly. This involves removing the ball, ensuring that there are no marks on it and dusting out the interior. Why the manufacturers of Amiga and ST mice do not include such advice is a mystery. But as PC users need to install software to use their mice, it's a good idea to check the accompanying documentation before you buy to make sure that you can actually understand what it's saying.

cont. on p70

MICE ROUND-UP

cont. from p69

are called pointing devices, or as they are more commonly known – mice.

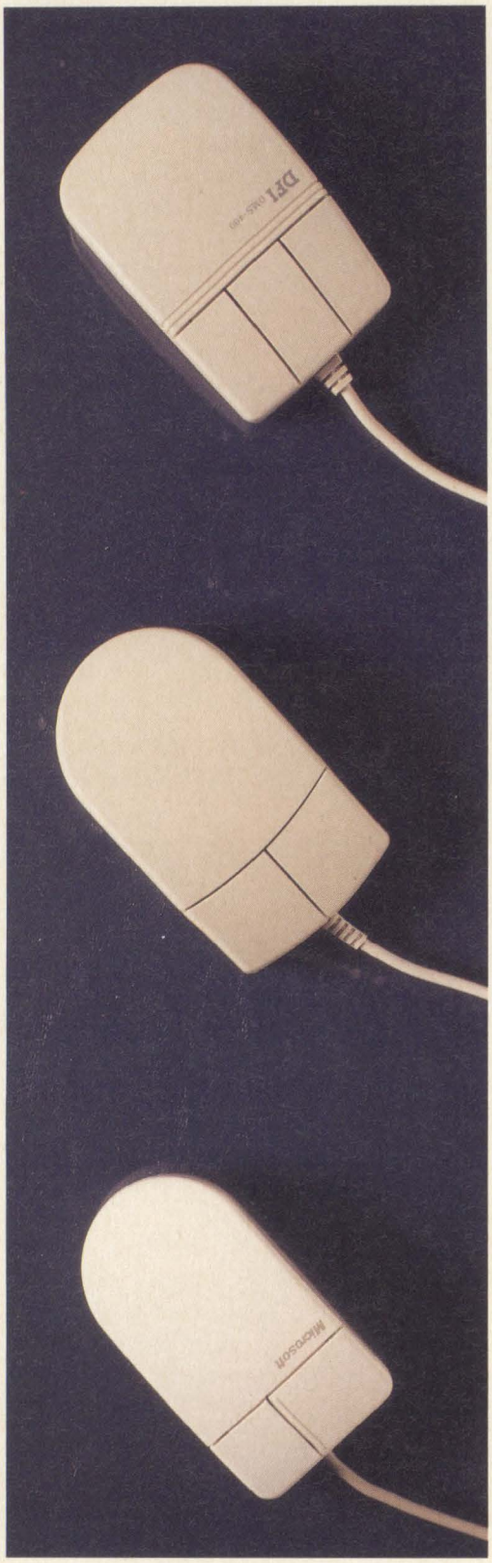
Different strokes

Amiga and ST users will be quite familiar with such devices, as they come as standard with their computers. But the PC user, will more often than not, have purchased a machine without this essential peripheral. The advantage of buying a mouse would seem obvious for a PC, but why should an Amiga or ST user buy a mouse when their computers come bundled with one anyway? The simple fact is these standard mice are not that hot. There are far better mice available. But which one to choose? There are so many mice available; there are even different devices that do exactly the same job, like optical mice and trackballs.

There are two different types of mouse: mechanical and optical. The mechanical mouse uses a ball to detect movement of the mouse. The ball is on the underside of the device and as you push it around on a solid surface the ball rolls about and the movement is detected by sensors inside the mouse.

"Optical mice operate using a beam of light instead of a ball and they have to be placed on a special mat to work."

Optical mice operate using a beam of light instead of a ball and they need to be placed on a special mat to work. These mats are covered with a



DFI DMS-400 (PC)

£29 • DFI ☎ 081-461 2322

The DFI DMS-400 is a three button mouse, but one with a difference as far as PC mice are concerned. There is no installation software. If you intend to purchase a mouse of this type, you need to know how to alter your AUTOEXEC.BAT file especially as the documentation that came with mouse proved to be of very little help. But with a little cross-referencing with a DOS manual, the installation was eventually achieved.

This is a slim-line mouse that sits a little over 15mm from the work surface. Surprisingly this proved to be quite comfortable. As the mouse is so low, there's no discomfort in using the mouse for periods in excess of 20 minutes (which you can easily do when using an art program). However, the square edges do tend to grind into the hand, which leads to a feeling of tacky quality.

It's when you look at the price of this mouse that it takes on a new light. It is hardly the best mouse on the market in terms of features and performance, but for a sub-£30 device it functions very well. No complaint can be made about the way the on-screen pointer follows mouse movement. It is just a pity that the installation software lets it down.

DFI DMS-400 55%

That's A Mouse (Amiga/ST)

£19.99 • Compo • ☎ 0480 891819

This mouse hardly has an innovative design. In fact, you could say that it's boring. There are no frills; it looks like your standard mouse – which it is. As there are no go faster stripes painted all over the casing it looks quite large but once in your hand it's surprisingly comfortable.

On closer examination it is soon apparent that this mouse has been very well-constructed. It gives the impression that it was built to last, and could possibly survive an earthquake.

The buttons give a satisfying audible click when pressed, but this is closely followed by a worrying springy sound when you release them. This isn't necessarily anything to be concerned about, but it doesn't seem to be quite right.

There is something missing from this mouse – the ability to impress. Although it will last a long time, there is not one feature about it that makes it feel as though you have made a good buy. Basically, it feels cheap. It won't astound you but neither will it disappoint you. This is no more than a simple mouse that will do the job – and for a long time to boot.

That's A Mouse 65%

Microsoft Mouse (PC)

£99 • Microsoft ☎ 0734 500741

The first impressions of this mouse are excellent. Although it looks simple and its construction is hardly at the forefront of technology, it exudes the air of being a true professional's mouse.

Once in your hand, it feels even better, with the type of air gap between mouse and hand that all mice should adopt. This without doubt is the ideal mouse for people who have to use mice for a long time at a stretch.

The two buttons are the best feature. They are well constructed, yet require only the slightest touch to operate. This makes it a dream for click and drag operations.

The only concern about this mouse is that the left-hand button is larger than the right. This may well prove a problem for left-handed users, but thankfully should you buy this with the Windows package the buttons can at least be swapped for this program.

Of all the PC mice tested, this is without doubt the most responsive. No matter how fast the movement, the pointer faithfully followed. The combination of its weight, style and operation make this a first-class pointer. Even though it costs nearly £100, it still provides value for money.

Microsoft Mouse 85%

film that has light and dark areas. When the light is bounced off these areas the reflected light changes intensity and the receptor built into the mouse then detects that the mouse is moving. As there is no ball in these mice, it makes them far lighter and there is no mechanical wear and tear either.

Trackballs work on exactly the same principle as a mechanical mouse. The only difference is that it has been turned upside down and you move the ball with your fingers.

Which sort you choose all boils down to what

Vital statistics – the measure of a mouse

A mouse is made up from three components – buttons, ball and movement sensors.

The buttons' function is to indicate that an operation is required in place where the on-screen pointer is at that time.

The ball and sensors provide the data about where the pointer should be. The ball is generally made of metal that has been covered in a rubber material. The reason that the ball is metal is so that it has some weight to it. This then ensures that the ball is always in contact with the work surface. It is covered with rubber for two reasons. First, so that it makes a good and sure contact with the work surface, and secondly, so that it makes a good grip with the movement sensors.

There are normally two sensors placed at a 45 degree angle. One detects side-to-side motion, while the other senses back-and-forth. These movements are then translated into electronic signals that are fed back to the computer.

Serial A – Naksha (PC)

£57.58 • Naksha ☎ 0925 56398

The Serial A lives in a half-way house because it is both Microsoft and Mouse Systems compatible. While this is, on the whole, advantageous it can prove a little disconcerting should the switch be changed accidentally – you'll find the mouse suddenly behaving in an erratic manner.

This installation software is excellent. It automatically makes the required changes to your AUTOEXEC.BAT file with no hassles.

This device may not be the most attractive mouse you'll ever encounter, but it's certainly one the most pleasing to use and preforms very well. The buttons are responsive and the translation between desk top movement and on-screen movement is extremely accurate. This is one of the few mice that you don't need to lift off the work surface to perform long moves, as its resolution has been set in such a way that it prevents this.

An extra factor in the Naksha's favour is that it comes bundled with *Deluxe Paint II*. This is not the full-blown package, but it is still a superlative 16-colour art program that provides you with an excellent opportunity to put your mouse to immediate use creating digital masterpieces.

Serial A – Naksha 85%

Quick Shot (PC)

£29.99 • Bondwell ☎ 081-363 1993

The Quick Shot mouse bears more than a passing resemblance to the Naksha; this could have something to do with the fact that they are in exactly the same casing. So what's are the differences? There are only two of any significance. First, the Quick Shot does not come bundled with *Deluxe Paint*, and secondly it's cheaper.

As with the Naksha, the operation of this mouse is excellent but for some odd reason, despite their outward similarity, it feels slightly different to its counterpart – when you move it about if feels like it's scratching the work surface.

The other fact that has to be taken into account is that there is no mouse holder with the Quick Shot. This can prove a problem with a PC as the computer takes up so much space anyway, desk space is always at a premium.

The question has to be, whether to get this mouse or the Naksha. The Quick Shot is the cheaper of the two mice, and has pretty much the same performance. But it doesn't come with a cut-down version of *Deluxe Paint*.

Quick Shot 75%

Euro Mouse (Amiga/ST)

£19.99 • Contriver ☎ 0280 822803

The Euro Mouse comes complete with a holder which has been well-constructed, but is pretty darned big, and takes up a lot of desk space.

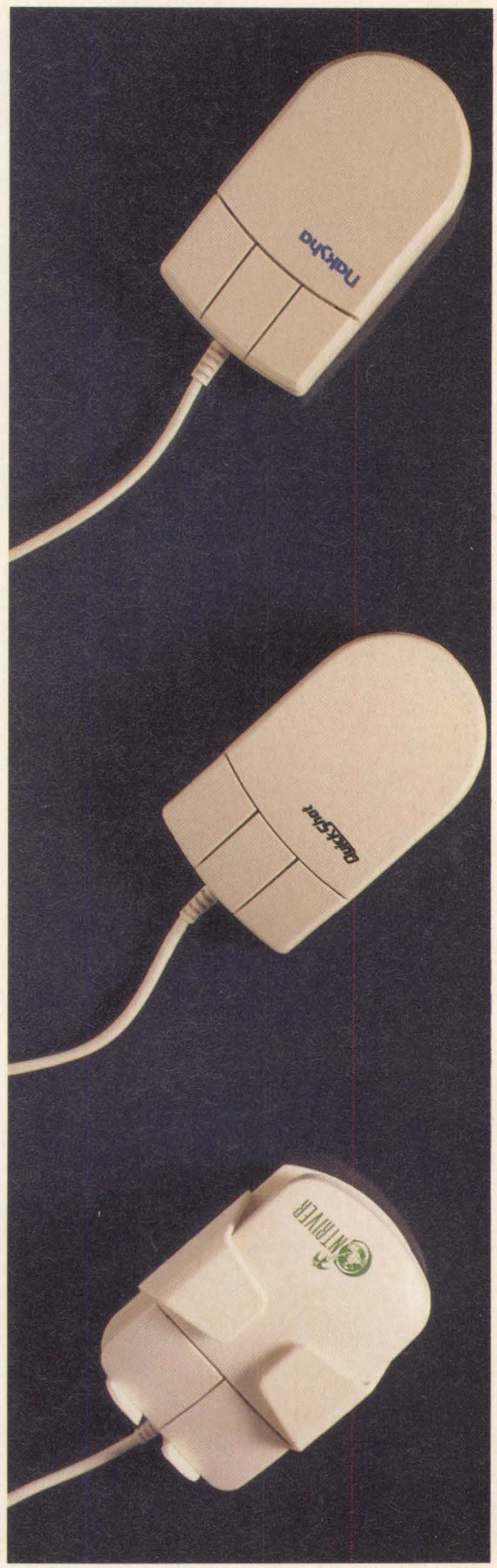
One way it differs from the other Amiga and ST mice on review is that the compatibility switch has been mounted on the side of the mouse. Although this may mot seem much of an advantage, it is – the switch will never snag on a work surface (ie, a fabric mouse mat) so that the mouse glides easily, and won't damage the surface.

It's a very attractive mouse and though the ball is huge it does have its advantages; you don't have to move the mouse as far to get the cursor moving across the screen at lightning speed.

The main point in the Euro Mouse's favour is that it has to be the most comfortable mouse that I've ever held. It fits very snugly into the hand and there is no way it will cause any wrist strain (now don't try to prove me wrong by using it 48 hours non-stop).

This device oozes quality. The casing is excellent, the buttons are responsive and the resolution is far more than adequate. It is only let down in one small way – the documentation. There isn't any.

Euro Mouse 80%



cont. on p72

MICE ROUND-UP

cont. from p71

you want it to do, and how much you want to spend. Light mice are ideal for people that intend to use a mouse for long periods of time. They are also excellent for fast movements. A heavier mouse is better suited if you need to make a mouse for small movements, say for a graphics programs, because the weight of the mouse gives it slightly more inertia, so that it is less likely to judder when you're using it.

All mice require a substantial amount of desk space to operate. This is where trackballs differ. They stay put on your desk and look like mice that have

Getting graphical

Once a mouse has been fitted to a computer, and providing the computer has the correct type of display, it can implement a Graphical User Interface (GUI). This is a computer environment that replaces the need for long sequences of key presses to carry out set commands.

These commands are replaced with icons – little pictures on-screen. All that has to be done to carry out an operation with these icons, is to place the on-screen pointer on one and click on a mouse button. This has many advantages, the most important of which is that the human brain reacts better to visual shapes than sequences. This means that it is far easier to understand and learn how to use such an environment.

The Amiga and ST use GUI's as standard. The PC has only just cottoned on to this form of programming with the advent of Microsoft Windows. But no one will dispute that this is the computer interface of the future.

Mega Mouse (Amiga/ST)

£15.00 • Alfa Data ☎ 081-365 1151

This looks no more than your average hanging on the peg standard mouse. It does however, come in two versions. The Mega Mouse bundle consists of only a mouse. But for a little extra, add-ons are for the offing.

Although the Mega Mouse is hardly a major technological breakthrough, it does respond well. All movements with this mouse are faithfully followed by the on-screen pointer.

At a first glance the Mega Mouse might look a bit small, but once you get your hand around it you'll not have any worries. It sits comfortably in the palm with the correct air space that ensures long term comfort.

After examining this mouse for some time, it became apparent that a great deal of care has been taken in not only its construction, but also its packaging. Each mouse comes with a piece of foam that has been placed over the ball to make sure that there is no way that the ball or movement sensors can be damaged while the mouse is in transit. This makes the Mega Mouse one of the most durable on test.

Mega Mouse 75%

OMM-MT (Amiga/ST)

£20.00 • Alfa Data ☎ 081-365 1151

The OMM-MT is identical to the Mega Mouse, as far as the mouse itself is concerned. The difference lies in the packaging.

The OMM-MT comes complete with a mouse mat and a mouse holder. The question this prompts has to be, are these extra worth the additional money? In truth, they are.

A mouse will last longer when working in conjunction with a mat, as they have been specially designed with the ball in mind. There is also the possibility of damaging a desk by the constant movement of the mouse on an unprotected worktop.

The mouse holder serves two functions. First, no matter what you intend to use a mouse for, there is unlikely to be a program that means that the mouse is in constant use. The holder stops the mouse from becoming an extra piece of desk clutter.

Secondly, when the computer is not in use, knowing that the mouse has been stored in a safe place, ensures that it is out of harm's way. Although you do have to pay more for these extras, in the end the expense is worthwhile.

OMM-MT 80%

Optical Mouse (Amiga/ST)

£35.00 • Alfa Data ☎ 081-365 1151

The Optical Mouse looks dull, but differs in one way to the other Amiga and ST mice on review – it has three button. This begs the question, why? The mice that come as standard with these computers only have two buttons, so is there any need for a third? The answer is simple: there isn't any need at all.

The only feature about this mouse that makes it different to the rest of the field is that it works with a beam of light. This means that it has to be used with its special mat. As there was little desk space available when testing, I placed this mat on my lap and the mouse work perfectly. Can you think of any other mouse that could do the same?

As there is no ball in this mouse, it is a good deal lighter than conventional mice. This makes it the fastest and most responsive mouse that was tested. And because it's designed to work with the mat the mouse glides beautifully.

There is only one drawback with the mouse/mat combination caused by the Amiga/ST switch. This is set in the base of the mouse and could scratch the pad. Should the mat be damaged, the mouse is next to worthless, so more care should have been taken with the positioning of this switch.

Optical Mouse 65%

been upside down – the ball is on the top. You control the cursor by actually moving the ball with your fingers. This makes them ideal if your desktop usually resembles the aftermath of an explosion in a stationery factory.

Machine specifics

Mice work in different ways with each type of machine. Although the vast majority of mice for the Amiga and ST are compatible, there is an added bonus for the Amiga user. On these mice there is a switch that defines it as either an Amiga or ST mouse. Should it be set to ST and connected to an Amiga, it no longer acts as a mouse, but as a joystick instead.

PCs don't have any direct way of telling that a mouse is attached. This means that adding a mouse is not a purely hardware matter. The computer has to be informed that a mouse has been attached. This is carried out with a small program that has to be included into the AUTOEXEC.BAT file on these machines. This tells the computer to expect information coming from a mouse at one of the serial ports.

Just to make life more difficult for the PC user, there are two standards for PC mice. These are Mouse Systems and Microsoft. There is no real decision to be made between these two standards, as most programs accept each, but it is fairly safe to say that the Microsoft standard is the more common.

Don't fall into the trap of thinking that all mice are pretty much the same. Consider carefully before you buy a new one what you need from it. PD

Microsoft Ballpoint (PC)

Trackball • £125 ☎ 0734 500741

This trackball has been designed with the portable PC in mind and clamps on to the side of the keyboard. On first impressions it looks too small to be any good, but as with so many things this is far from the case.

Microsoft has a reputation for high quality products and the Ballpoint is a very good example. It is well designed with a lot of possibilities considered. Though there are four buttons, it is, in fact, a two-button device. This is so that a left or right hand user can use it with equal ease.

The installation of the required software is astounding. It does not just shove the software onto a drive and forget about anything else, it also includes a tutorial. This has been designed for people that have never used a mouse before. It teaches the novice how to point at an icon, click on it, drag items and double click. It also includes a compatibility program for installing the required software for Microsoft *Windows*. This adds an extra program group, so that the set-up of this device can be changed if required.

Microsoft has once more produce one of the best pointing devices on the market.

Microsoft Ballpoint 85%

Crystal Mouse (PC)

£34.99 • Suncom ☎ 0453 753565

The odd thing about this mouse is how it has been made. The case is transparent plastic, and the ball is green and orange. This means that the user can clearly see the internal workings of the mouse and how the ball operates. But while the Crystal looks like a novelty item it is actually a fairly decent mouse that performs very respectably.

The Crystal has a rather large footprint which, at first, makes it look as though it could be difficult to slide. However, there are four well-positioned non-stick pads on the mouse that prevents this.

Its shape takes some getting used to, but after a couple of minutes you'll realise it is actually very comfortable. The three buttons have been placed on the front of the device, so that when you place your hand on it, your fingers will naturally hang directly over them.

The installation software includes a program that checks to see if the software has been installed successfully. Also included is a CGA paint package.

The Crystal Mouse is the perfect combination of good looks and functionality.

Crystal Mouse 70%

TKB – MT (Amiga/ST)

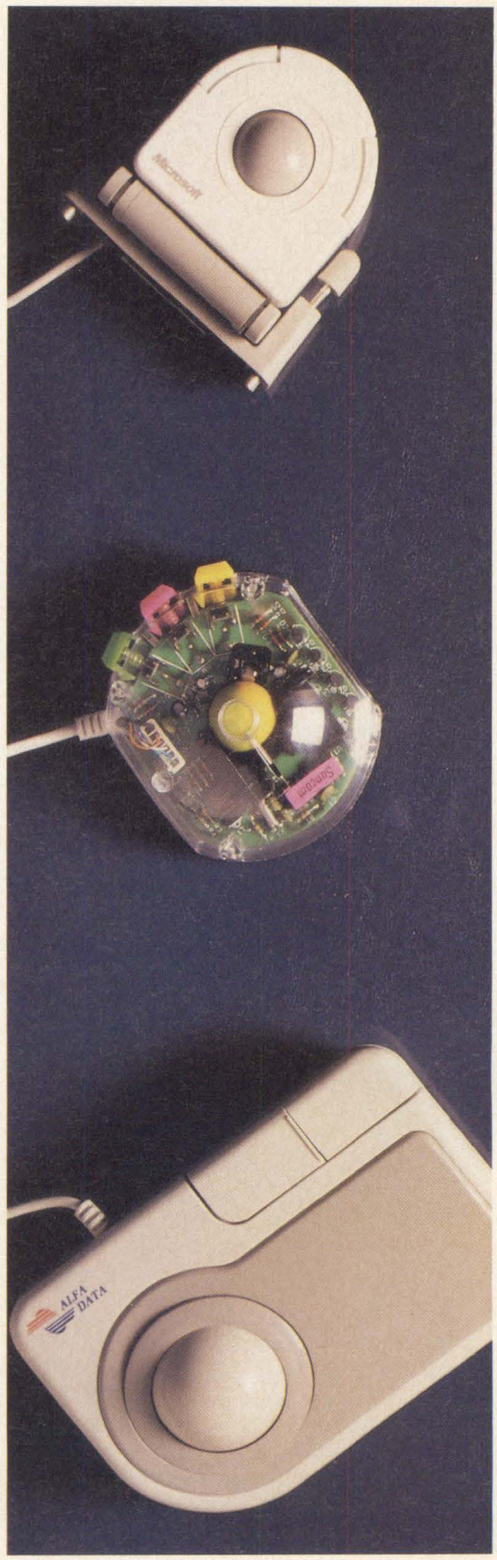
£29.00 • Alfa Data ☎ 081-365 1151

The TBK is a futuristic-looking trackball with smooth lines. As the TKB comes without the ball fitted, the first task is to remove the ball restraint and insert the ball. This restraint seems to be raised further than necessary, but this does not effect its overall operation. Once the ball has been inserted, all that remains is to plug it into the mouse/joystick port.

The TKB preforms well. The most common problem with trackballs is that of their response to fast movements. This more often than not results in the pointer remaining stationary for a moment and then eventually catching up with itself. The manufacturers of the TKB have fixed this problem as the pointer follows all movements of the ball dutifully.

The only features that detracts from the operation of this device are the buttons. Although they have been ideally placed for general applications they may well prove irritating should you require your mouse to preform speedy tasks. The TKB also begs the question of how a left-handed user would feel with this device, as the buttons have been placed on the right of the trackball. This aside, the TKB is an excellent example of how a mouse is not the only choice for a pointing device.

TKB – MT 80%



Demos

Once that last level of the game you got for Christmas has been finished, you may be at a loose end wondering how to use your machine for entertainment and relaxation. The answer? A PD demo or two. Maff Evans tests the latest crop on the old clapometer...

Wildfire Megademo

Amiga • 2137 • PD Soft
1 Bryant Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS1 2YD
☎ 0702 466933

The Wildfire coding team is usually known for putting together some of the more unsurprising, standard PD demos, simply using vector shapes, scrolly text messages and pretty uninspiring tunes. This time, however, the team has come up with something a little more impressive than its usual fare.

The disk starts off by displaying a film countdown style opening sequence, eventually getting into the swing of things by displaying some digitised pictures of the people responsible for the demo along with short 'programmer profiles' (a bit self-indulgent, but then self-indulgence is a major theme of many demos anyway). The music backing this section is the usual PD fare, but contains some nice chord changes nonetheless.

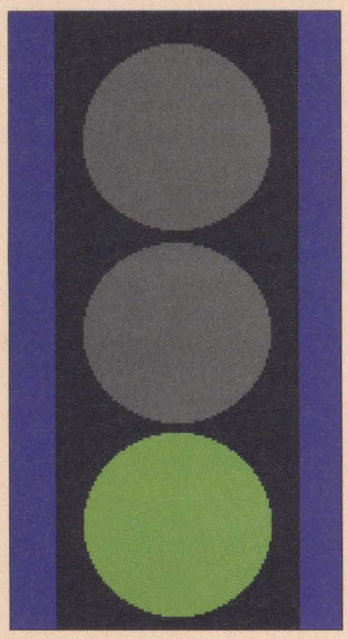
The next section is a short clip, featuring a set of traffic lights with red and green man symbols over the top. The lights fade away at the end of the section, leaving the green man to walk off the screen – and a very nice animation it is, too!

After this little interlude, things really start to get going, with the *Tekk-No* demo. This is a wild, acid-style video, complete with pounding music and wacky images. The visuals range from walking scorpions, through flashing text messages in time with the music to strobe effects and pulsating logos. There are even a few wire-frame shapes jigging in time with the beat.

The music itself lifts beats from the dancefloor hit *Satan*, along with bursts from C&C Music Factory, to create an excellent slab of hip/dance groove. The first demo in this style was Rebel's *COMA*, and *Tekk-No* is the only acid-demo which has managed to beat the high standard set by the original.

The last section is a simple credits scroller, but the music is a lazy dance track with shuffling drums and a neat string section. The most notable thing about this last track is the excellent, stuttered use of the line *Papa was a Rolling Stone*, which fits into the song perfectly.

If the Wildfire teamb keeps putting together demos of this quality, then they could be one of the top names in the world of the demo. Keep it up, boys.



Ready for some wild images and hardcore music? Well, you'd better wait for the lights to change first. It's hard to simulate the power of some of the music on this demo in a grab. Turn your stereo up loud, switc the lights and off and jiggle the page around a bit if you want to try

AMIGA 91%

Weird Science Astronomy Slideshow

Amiga • 2114 • PD Soft
1 Bryant Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS1 2YD
☎ 0702 466933

The idea for this demo was conceived by Chris Hill (taking a break from the *Potato Head* animations, presumably) and is basically an advert for a digitising service (dear me, consumerism, eh?) After starting off with a mundane starfield and a rotating *Weird Science* logo, a rather atmospheric piece of choir music starts playing to back-up a series of digitised space pictures.

Most outer-space slideshows consist of pictures of satellites, space shuttles and astronauts, but this one takes a somewhat different view. The pictures are all digitised shots of constellations, dust clouds and nebulae, which may sound rather boring, but they are all clear and well digitised. Space boffins will no doubt find it useful and you could watch the show while listening to your ambient house albums, but many people may find the subject a little too dull to bother getting hold of the disk.

AMIGA 60%

***Weird Science Astronomy Slideshow*: See how the light of the er... suns of... er... light up the er.. well yes. But it looks nice**

Fatman Demo

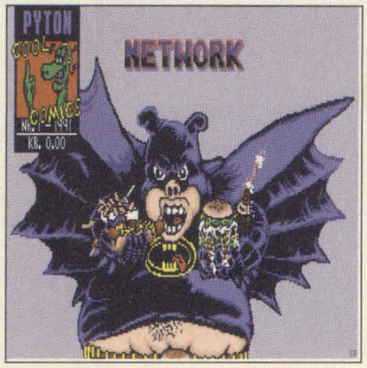
ST • CH139/D • Captain Hack's 19 Latimer Drive, Laindown, Essex SS15 4RD ☎ 0268 416888

Comedy is usually rife in demos – more so on the ST than any other machine. The intro picture to this shows a wobbly character named Fatman stuffing his face, and although it sounds gross it's actually very well drawn. Unfortunately, the rest of the disk doesn't really match up to this standard.

The first of the

Reviews Index

500 Things – The Comeback (Amiga)	76
Alien Breed Animation (Amiga)	82
Ami-FX 4 (Amiga)	84
Buzzed (Amiga)	82
Dave's Stunt Animations (Amiga)	80
Digi-Synth Number One (ST)	75
Divina's Techno Fright (Amiga)	76
Fatman Demo (ST)	74
Gotta Go! (Amiga)	82
Gulf War Conflict (Amiga)	84
It's a Lame D-Mo (Amiga)	78
Laterna Magica (Amiga)	80
The Lemming Animation (Amiga)	81
Lemming Curd For Breakfast (Amiga)	76
Lightening Demo (ST)	80
Magad! Megademo (Amiga)	81
Miami Vice Remix (Amiga)	75
Muttley on the Bounty (Amiga)	80
Perfect Pictures Volume One (Amiga)	81
Punish Your Machine (ST)	80
Rebels' – The Thing (Amiga)	81
Rhapsody In Blue (Amiga)	75
Sumoning of the Spawn (ST)	78
Swedish New Year Demo (ST)	76
Terminator 2 Slideshow (Amiga)	75
Tony Horgan's 'Charly" (Amiga)	81
Weird Science Astronomy Slideshow (Amiga)	74
Wildfire Megademo (Amiga)	74
WWF Slideshow (Amiga)	78
Year After Demo (ST)	78

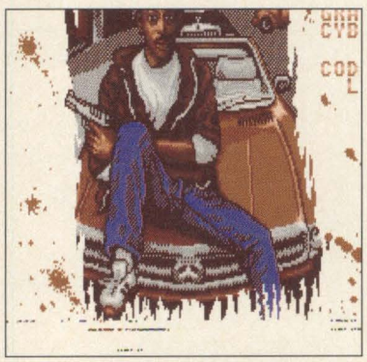


Look what happens to a superhero if he doesn't watch what he eats. He turns into superslob, Fatman!

sections is a weird picture based on the game *Vixen*. The picture itself isn't that odd, but the fact that you can move it up and down with the joystick is. For what purpose I have no idea!

The next demo is a short 'comic' interlude, consisting of a couple of completely unfunny cartoon strips. The artwork is OK, but they could have got a couple of decent jokes first!

Next up is a slow, jerky scrolltext laid over a line of snowmen who open their coats to flash at the watcher in time with the dire music. Hilarious, I'm



Well! I don't think Eddie Murphy would have been quite so much of a superstar if he looked like he does in the *Fatman* demo

sure (fib, fib).

The rest of the disk follows on in pretty much the same vein, with more awful tunes and more badly-drawn pictures. There is even an attempt to add a risqué quality by sticking in some fairly rude pictures, which backfires as the whole thing ends up looking shabby.

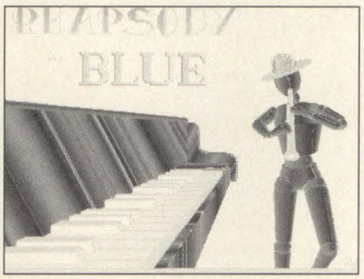
The thing that takes the biscuit however, is the absolutely appalling Eddie Murphy picture, which is backed up by a quiet, muffled and scratchy version of *Axel F*. Why do they bother?

ST 20%

Rhapsody in Blue

Amiga • 1192 • Amiganuts
169 Dale Valley Road, Hollybrook, Southampton SO1 6QX

As far as classic composers go, George Gershwin has to be one of the greats. His music has entertained and inspired music lovers for years, so it



***Rhapsody in Blue* is supposed to be a languid and flowing piece of music, but this version actually sounds as though it was played by this wooden guy!**

seems a shame to see one of his classic pieces undergoing a treatment such as this.

The demo starts off by displaying a rather crude picture which (I suppose) is meant to capture the jazz atmosphere. When the music actually starts, instead of being a vivid and exciting portrayal of the original tune we have a thin and weedy rendition of Gershwin's piece.

If you're a fan of George Gershwin, then I'd most definitely advise you to avoid this!

AMIGA 30%

Miami Vice Remix

Amiga • 104 • Amiganuts
169 Dale Valley Road, Hollybrook, Southampton SO1 6QX

Things must be getting a bit thin in the world of PD demos, since Amiganuts

A blast from the past here, with a version of Jan Hammer's *Miami Vice* music

has sent us this rather old back-catalogue disk. Jan Hammer's *Miami Vice* music was quite a popular subject a few years ago, with a wide range of demo disks available containing versions of both the theme music and the hit single *Crockett's Theme*.

This disk is basically a version of the latter, but contains some of the more rocking elements of the main theme. The whole tune has been liberally plastered with a wash of echo, making the song sound blurred and indistinct. This ruins the hypnotic and atmospheric feel of the original and reduces it to a cacophonous background drone.

The picture that backs up the demo isn't much better either, being a simple digitised pic of Don Johnson standing in front of a badly drawn Miami skyline. Looking at this demo makes it quite clear how far demos have come in the past few years.

AMIGA 42%

Terminator 2 Slideshow

Amiga • 1465 • 17-Bit
PO Box 97, Wakefield
WF1 1XX
☎ 0924 366982

Creating PD demos on a particular subject can be a bit limiting. However, basing your demo on the latest science fiction blockbuster is usually a safe bet. This two-disk demo is based on *Terminator 2* and features a variety of shots taken from various promotion material, including leaflets, posters and photographs, some swiped from *Starburst* magazine.

The digitising quality varies across the pictures, ranging from the clear and colourful to the downright 'fuzzy

As the metal doors slam shut, Arnie prepares to deal out some judgement with his shotgun

Sarah Connor toughens up and gets the armaments ready. Well she looks tough here, anyhow!

as hell' variety. The music which backs up the pictures sounds pretty much like those trendy watch adverts you see on the telly around Christmas time – in other words not very good!

If you're a fan of the *T2* film (and judging by the film charts of the last year, there are quite a few), then you may find this collection mildly diverting. If not, then you may as well give this collection of pictures a miss.

AMIGA 58%

Digi-Synth Number One

ST • CH146/D • Captain Hack's
19 Latimer Drive, Laindown,
Essex SS15 4RD
☎ 0268 416888

***Digi-Synth Number One*: bounce them logos and play some funky tunes... er... man!**

For a disk which is supposed to contain some of the best in PD music, this is pretty lame. The intro is simply a scrolly-text message and some bouncing logos, backed up by a thin, tinny tune. Loading the demo songs themselves doesn't improve matters that much either, since they all seem to be based on a few fuzzy-guitar sounds and scratchy rhythm patterns – especially *Heavy* which is a dead ringer for Status Quo!

The only time the disk ventures on

cont. on p76

cont. from p75

the appealing side is with *Jolly Jogger*, which sounds like early Depeche Mode and Yazoo, evoking the feel of early '80s pop. However, this is let down by the fact that it is followed by an incredibly flat rendition of Jan Hammer's *Crockett's Theme*. Give me a break! This song has been done to death too many times!

If you want some decent music, you'd be better off buying a single than suffering these ditties.

ST 30%

Lemming Curd for Breakfast

Amiga • 1467 • 17-Bit
PO Box 97, Wakefield WF1 1XX
☎ 0924 366982

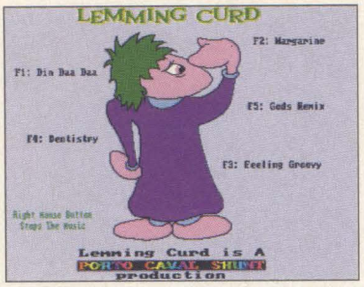
The surprise hit-game of last year had to be Psygnosis' *Lemmings*, and quite a few PD demos soon started appearing based on those strange little green-haired chaps.

Lemming Curd for Breakfast contains a Lemming reference (you'd never guess from the title, would you?), but it has to be the most tenuous link so far. All that it contains Lemming-wise is a pretty badly-drawn purple Lemming, with the rest of the demo consisting of a number of pretty mundane tunes.

The first tune is a version of wacky German George Krantz's *Trommeltanz – Din Daa Daa*, constructed using samples from the original track. The song is good fun (if you haven't heard it before) but the sound quality leaves a lot to be desired, since the samples all sound pretty scratchy.

Margarine comes next and is basically a standard PD ditty, with predictable chord changes and a bland backbeat, except that it's slightly worse than the usual effort! *Feeling Groovy* gets off to a pretty decent start, with a drum pattern reminiscent of American industrial rockers Nine Inch Nails, but the whole thing degenerates into a tacky euro-disco affair which makes you reach for the off switch.

Dentistry picks things up a tad by injecting a dash of dance-groove to the proceedings. However the drum sounds could do with being cleaned up a bit! The disk finishes up with a new version of Nation 12's *Into the*



Looks like this poor Lemming has been under the sunbed for too long – he's gone all purple

Wonderful (more famous for its inclusion in the Bitmap Brothers' game, *Gods*). Since the samples have been lifted straight from the game itself, the sound quality is pretty good, but unfortunately the track lacks the dynamics of the original.

As far as PD music goes, *Lemming Curd for Breakfast* isn't much to shout about, since everything sounds as though it was done in a hell of a hurry. Pretty disappointing.

AMIGA 32%

Divina's Techno Fright

Amiga • 1471 • 17-Bit
PO Box 97, Wakefield WF1 1XX
☎ 0924 366982

When a demo disk starts off by showing some horribly pretentious poetry, you begin to get the impression that things are going to be a bit strained for the rest of the disk.

True enough, *Divina* does get going with some nicely drawn pics, such as the main loading picture and the demon on the Divina logo, but the rest of the demo is taken up by the usual bland rock soundtrack and tedious vectors. Divina tries to spice things up by introducing what it calls *The Hopalong Algorithm*, which is basically a fractal-dot drawing code,

Shades of film-maker Sam (*Evil Dead*) Raimi come to the fore in the visuals of Divina's *Techno Fright* demo

and flinging up a couple of fantasy pictures and Mandelbrot patterns.

The last section states that it contains some, 'Cool graphics for our friends only'. All I can say is that they must have a lot of enemies!

AMIGA 37%

Swedish New Year Demo

ST • DEM358C • Floppyshop
45 Provst Graham Avenue, Hazelhead, Aberdeen AB1 8HB
☎ 0224 312756

After loading up a bright and cheerful intro screen, the *Swedish New Year Demo* promises to be an interesting little piece. Unfortunately, it soon descends into the usual PD demo scrolls and plasma effects.

The main intro consists of some colourful letters whizzing about, with a weedy tune playing in the background

Swedish New Year Demo: ant to clean up the demo scene? Then you need a big Sync. Ha-ha! (You're fired, Maff – Ed)

which is trying to sound atmospheric. Unfortunately it doesn't!

The *Ball Scroll* demo challenges other coders to come up with something better, but it shouldn't be hard since the text rotates around the ball extremely slowly and it's too misshapen to read!

The next demo has a similar appearance to the main intro screen, except that the letters ripple as they fly about the screen. Such originality! This is followed up by another couple of PD workhorses – the user controlled vectorball display and a boring bouncing logo.

The last demo on the disk is the only one worth looking at. It contains a big 'Sync' logo and some smoothly-rotating vector shapes – different from the usual amorphous streams of blobs. The backing music isn't bad either (if a little scratchy) and shows what can be done with a little thought.

Unfortunately, there seems to be a great lack of variety in ST demos. Where are the entertaining animations and cartoons found on some of the other machines?

ST 25%

500 Things – The Comeback

Amiga • 17-Bit
PO Box 97, Wakefield WF1 1XX
☎ 0924 366982

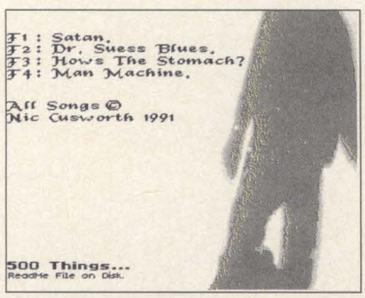
If any of you Amiga owners out there saw issue 29 of our sister mag *Amiga Format*, you'll no doubt be aware that a free copy of *OctaMED* was given away on the cover. One person who's taken advantage of this generosity is Nic Cusworth. Nic has put together a few PD music demos in the past, covering a diverse collection of styles. With *500 Things – The Comeback* he has shown his true colours with some of the most powerful music this side of Wagner and Beethoven.

Satan, the first track, isn't based on the club hit of last year, but is an original tune featuring pounding drums, a harsh bassline and a collection of eerie film-samples.

Dr Seuss Blues is more laid back, employing electro-sounds to play a rather odd jazz-blues number.

The heavy machine-noise returns with *How's the Stomach*, which sounds more menacing than the title of the track would suggest.

Man Machine is also a misleading title, since rather than being a version of the Kraftwerk classic, it's a Depeche Mode-style song based on a sample from the original *Terminator* film. The



Moody imagery backs up some of the most powerful Amiga music yet heard on a demo

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cont. from p76

overall feel of the songs is very much in the style of offbeat American electro-punk band Thrill Kill Kult, with elements of Nitzer Ebb, Nine Inch Nails and Depeche Mode thrown in (I think that means it makes a lot of 'clanging' noises – Ed).

Nic includes a list of his musical influences on the disk, so if you like the demo you've got a lot of material to look out for. If, on the other hand, you don't know Nic's work, but like the bands mentioned above, then have a listen to this disk – it's one of the best music demos to appear for some time.

AMIGA 89%

Summoning of the Spawn

ST • CH208/D • Captain Hack's 19 Latimer Drive, Laindown, Essex SS15 4RD
☎ 0268 416888

What is it with ST demo creators? Are they all frustrated game designers? Do they dream of being signed up by software houses for Bitmap Brothers-style fame? If not, why do so many of them put pseudo-games into their demos to select the various sections?

Summoning of the Spawn is another of these 'game-menu' demos, with a rather scrappy version of *Cybernoid* being used to choose the section you want. What you do is fly the ship around the scenery and enter the gaps marked DEMO. Unfortunately, the sections aren't labelled by name, so you don't know what you're loading at any time!

All the sections are pretty much the bog-standard PD demo fare, with scrolly messages and wacky rainbow colours – hardly pushing the machine to its limits. There is a scrolltext with a

***Summoning the Spawn* looks like *Cybernoid*, but doesn't play like it. After all it's only a demo selector**

Pump up the volume to see those VU meters dance. Don't pump it too high though, the music isn't that hot

Digital Justice logo, a scrolltext over a rather garish backdrop, a scrolltext with a dotty background, a scrolltext with big letters, a scrolltext with a 3D floor and... well, you get the picture.

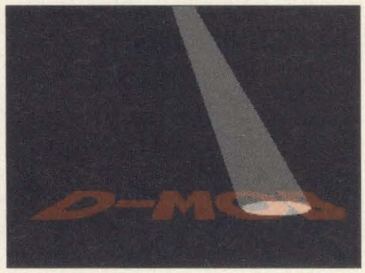
The only section that veers slightly from this format is the music screen which features three VU meters flicking away in time with the tunes. Unfortunately, the tunes aren't too awe inspiring, meaning that this demo doesn't hold much more interest than any of the other sections. Couple this lack of imagination with the fact that the *Cybernoid*-select procedure is very dodgy indeed, and *Summoning of the Spawn* hardly stands out as 'one to watch out for'.

ST 41%

It's a Lame D-Mo

Amiga • 2120 • PD Soft
1 Bryant Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS1 2YD
☎ 0702 466933

What is it with all these people giving names to their demos which give the impression that they are particularly crap? D-Mob is the latest team to use this tactic with its new production *It's a Lame D-Mo*. The intro is pretty nice,



And tonight the spotlight falls on... the floor! Well there is a pretty nifty D-Mob logo on the floor, so it's not too bad

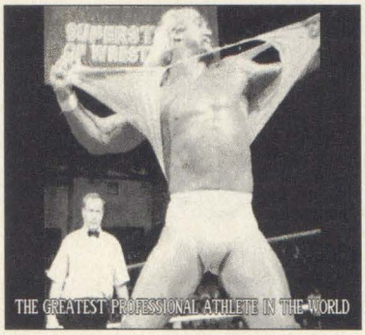
with a spotlight shining on the D-Mob logo, but it's backed up with a dull tune trying its best to work in a Kraftwerk sample to dismal effect. The rest of the disk is taken up by the usual diamond-patterned, cuboid vector shapes floating around under a number of D-Mob logos. The thing is, but it's all been seen before. Do something else for a change!

AMIGA 31%

WWF Slideshow

Amiga • Paul Bowler, 13 Taylors Mews, Neath Hill, Milton Keynes MK14 6HL
Include SAE and three PD disks

If you're an ardent fan of wrestling and happen to own two drives, then this is for you. After kicking in with a rather dodgy American TV theme-style tune, the *WWF* appears to introduce the demo. Across the three disks is a collection of digitised black and white pictures of a number of American



***WWF*: Hulk Hogan the greatest athlete in the world? Well, most people would disagree with you there (except his mum, perhaps)**

wrestling stars. Only insomniacs and shift workers who have little choice than to watch late night network television or avid sports fans who catch every scrap of wrestling reporting they can will have heard of many of these (with the possible exception of Hulk Hogan), so the subject matter could safely be termed obscure to say the least.

Unless you get all a-quiver when watching a couple of muscle-bound men hurling each other about (I say! Calm down missus!) then this demo isn't really for you – that's pretty much all it consists of.

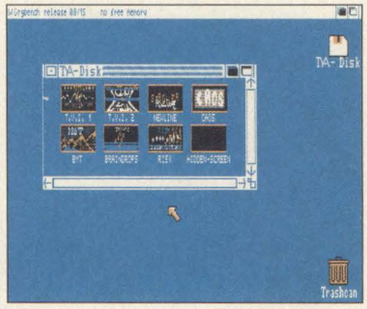
ST 43%

Year After Demo

ST • D-0104 • Caledonia PDL 250 Oldtown Road, Hilton, Inverness IV2 4PT
☎ 0463 225736

Talk about ugly! The first thing that appears on this demo is a big grinning gremlin's face. Yuk! Hardly a gentle introduction to a disk, is it? Still, the picture is very well drawn and the music is quite menacing, being based on *DSMO1*, another track by those Belgian electro-rockers Front 242. It still sounds pretty tinny though.

This is quickly followed by a pretty impressive film-like opening sequence, with a starburst effect introduction to a nice Oriental typeface. The demo selection page is quite a nice spoof on an Amiga Workbench screen. To load



This may look like an Amiga Workbench Screen, but it's actually the demo selector from the ST *Year After Demo*

a demo you first click on the disk icon, then click on the icon of the demo you want to see. Simple, but effective.

Most of the demos consist of scrolly texts and a logo of the coders involved, but there is one section which stands out above the others. TVI has put together an odd 3D scrolltext, with the letters whizzing out of the distance above and below a TVI logo. The music that plays in the background is a little muffled, but the tune is very good indeed. I wonder what it is...

Apart from the TVI demo, the disk

Fancy loading up a demo to see this ugly mug beaming at you? Still, that's what you get on these demo thingies

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cont. from p78

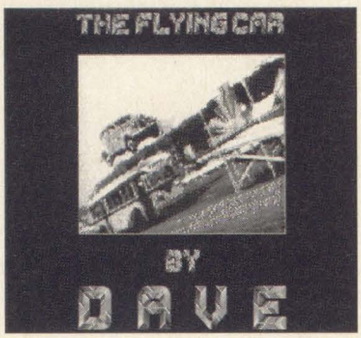
is pretty unremarkable. However, the techniques and overall effect on the 3D scroller are quite appealing, so have a look if that's your bag.

ST 75%

Dave's Stunt Animations

Amiga • 1463 • 17-Bit
PO Box 97, Wakefield WF1 1XX
☎ 0924 366982

Anyone who enjoys watching cars crash and bash themselves into twisted heaps of metal will love this demo. The



Wow! Look at that car fly! Can you believe the stunts some people will do?

disk contains three digitised black and white animations of stunts.

The first is a bus leaping over a row of cars, with the roles being reversed on another clip showing a car jumping over buses! The last piece is of an old stock car performing a death-defying barrel-roll, which should satisfy the wreckage fans!

The animations are all rather short, but the subject matter is fun and images have been well digitised. Oh, and it's cheaper than buying one of those *Car Wars* videos that are advertised on the telly.

AMIGA 76%

Muttley on the Bounty

Amiga • 1461 • 17-Bit
PO Box 97, Wakefield WF1 1XX
☎ 0924 366982

Dave Henderson makes another appearance on the demo circuit with another in his series of digitised animations. This time he goes for a more straightforward clip featuring that well-loved cartoon duo, Dastardly and Muttley.

The scene has been grabbed from the cartoon *Muttley on the Bounty* and features the part where Dick Dastardly makes his sidekick walk the plank. When there is no splash, the nefarious captain investigates the scene, only to see Muttley sawing away at the plank. What a joker, eh?

I may be biased on this one, but I happen to like Dastardly and Muttley! Although the demo is short, it captures the mad, slapstick atmosphere of their cartoons, so it's a success as far as I'm concerned! Check it out for yourself for a bit of a giggle.

Bash! Some classic slapstick comedy courtesy of Dastardly and Muttley in another of Dave's digitised animations

AMIGA 78%

Laterna Magica

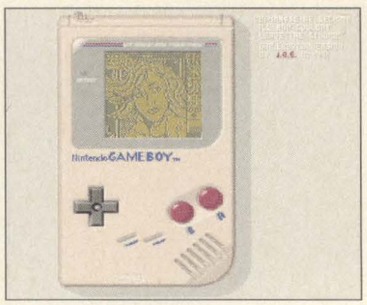
Amiga • 1445 • 17-Bit
PO Box 97, Wakefield WF1 1XX
☎ 0924 366982

***Laterna Magica*: ah, the peaceful countryside. Believe it or not, the graphics for the hills were all created using mathematics**

One of the most obvious attractions of the Amiga is its ability to produce high-quality graphics. *Laterna Magica* is a demo which shows off some of the things possible with Amiga art, including some extremely nice pictures combining normal drawing with other graphics techniques such as realistic fractal landscapes.

The most notable piece of art has to be the picture entitled *M-Maybe*, which features a Lichtenstein picture drawn in *Deluxe Paint*... on a Nintendo Game Boy! You never know – it could happen.

Along with the pictures, there is a pretty nice piece of music running in the background, with some atmospheric chord changes to emphasise the moody feel of the demo. Fans of Amiga art – get those orders off today!



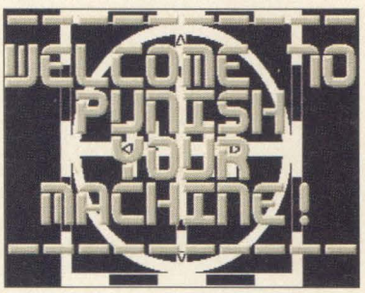
Is that *Deluxe Paint* running on the Nintendo Game Boy? Could that possibly happen? Well... M-maybe...

AMIGA 81%

Punish Your Machine

ST • D112/D113 • Caledonia PDL
250 Oldtown Road, Hilton, Inverness IV2 4PT
☎ 0463 225736

When I first saw this disk, I was pretty interested. This is because *Punish Your Machine* is a track by my favourite group Front 242. I thought that the disk would contain some vivid, cyberpunk imagery and powerful music, but unfortunately, it doesn't.



Front 242 make another appearance on the PD scene in the *Punish Your Machine* demo

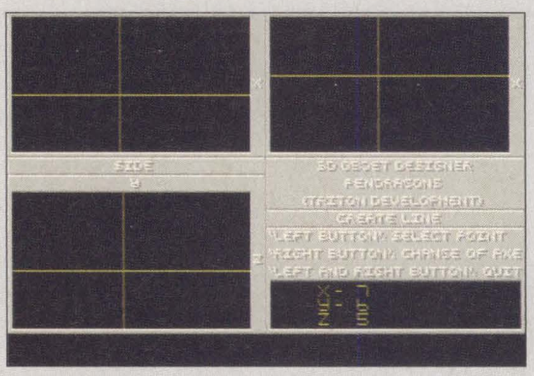
The only 242 references are the

Lightning Demo

ST • Riverdene PDL
30a School Road, Tilehurst, Reading, Berkshire RG3 5AN
☎ 0734 452416

This is yet another of those ST demos that involves you playing a simple game to select the various sub-sections. After loading up a logo hovering above a watery floor, the demo passes through a space intro picture before reaching the game-select section.

The game is very similar in style to Infogrames' *Jumping Jack Son*, except that Jack seems to have gone bald! The scenery contains a number of styles, ranging from mediaeval doors, grates and walls, to metallic logos and icy-looking platforms. To select a demo, you walk around the scenery and enter one of the doors. This is sometimes more difficult than it seems, since the sprite tends to wander off the side of the screen, out of view of the player!



The *Lightning Demo* includes this 3D object creator. Unfortunately it's a bitch to use!

As ever, the demos are all simple scrolltexts and tracker tunes, but most of the music is pretty acceptable. The only remotely different section is a plasma-wave demo. 'Who says that you can only do this on the Amiga?' boasts the intro to the section. Well, no-one really. It's just that most Amiga demo coders have managed to come up with more interesting ways of using the effect than simply wobbling colours up and down!

AMIGA 51%

title and the target logo on the intro (taken from the cover to the album *Tyranny >For You<*). The rest of the disk is taken up by uninteresting scrolly messages and twee tunes.

Why bother referring to a hard electronic dance group if you're going to end up sounding like Erasure with a duff synth? It's beyond me.

ST 31%

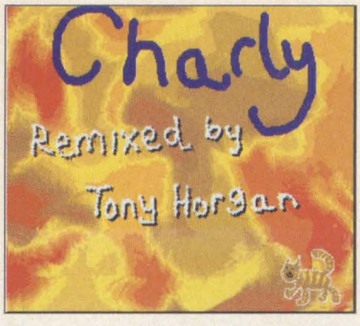
Tony Horgan's 'Charly'

Amiga • 1432 • 17-Bit
PO Box 97, Wakefield
WF1 1XX
☎ 0924 366982

As well as having a brief fling in the upper reaches of the pop charts, dance group Prodigy has managed to inspire quite a few PD demo creators to produce their own versions of the hit single *Charly*. The latest comes from Tony Horgan, who has taken various sampled sections of the record and messed about with them to produce a very individual remix.

Things start off normally enough, with the song sounding similar to the single, but later in the track Tony starts doing all kinds of weird stuff, including reversing samples, fading stuff in and out of the mix and generally doodling about. If you want to produce a new version of a song, this is the way to do it. Make it sufficiently different from the original – or don't bother at all!

AMIGA 80%



Tony Horan's 'Charly': Ah... well... must be one of those 'avante-garde' cat drawings. Love the typeface though

Rebels' – The Thing

Amiga • 1475 • 17-Bit
PO Box 97, Wakefield
WF1 1XX ☎ 0924 366982

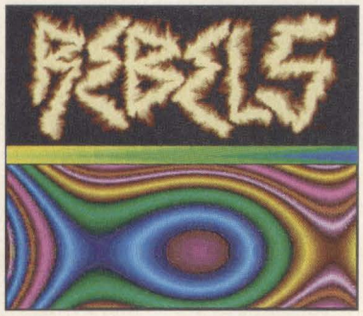
After being surpassed by young techno-demo creators such as Wildfire, the originators of the *COMA* demo, Rebels, has come back with a new piece of dancefloor power entitled *The Thing*.

The music is extremely good, with frantic acid bleeps and powerhouse electro drums to push the groove along, but the visuals are sadly lacking in the ability-to-impress department.

All you see on-screen is a rather scrappy Rebels logo which fades from colour to colour, a copper-effect band across the middle of the screen and an area at the bottom which displays text messages and patterns. Not really pushing back the frontiers of demo writing, are we guys?

Still, the tune is pretty hot, so turn up the volume and get on down!

AMIGA 65%



What a fiery bunch this must be (ho, not very ho)! Even though the images are nothing new, the music more than makes up for it

Perfect Pictures Volume One

Amiga • 2029 • PD Soft
1 Bryant Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS1 2YD
☎ 0702 466933

When home computing was still a fairly new thing, most programmers seemed to be ardent heavy metal fans. These days the majority of coders seem to be into serious techno music, but the *Perfect Pictures* collection shows us that there are a few of those rockin' fans out there!

The disk contains a number of digitised heavy metal images, including the Megadeth preacher character and Iron Maiden's Eddy. Perfect pictures? Well they are colourful and well digitised, but they're only going to be of any real interest to other heavy metal fans!

AMIGA 71%

Well, his mum did say 'If the wind changes – your face will stick like that!'

Magad! Megademo

Amiga • 2028 • PD Soft
1 Bryant Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS1 2YD
☎ 0702 466933

Well, it seems as though the techno-demo is making a bit of a comeback! What with Rebel's putting some more Hardcore on *The Thing* demo, Wildfire

cont. on p82

The Lemming Animation

Amiga • H665 • NBS
132 Gunville Road, Newport, Isle of Wight PO30 5LH
☎ 0983 529594

A bit presumptuous that – calling your demo *THE Lemming Animation* when there is already an animation based on the green-haired and brainless ones. Nevertheless, this clip is rather different from Eric Schwartz irreverent piece (reviewed in issue one), taking a very different (and somewhat more deep) look at the life of a poor Lemming.

The demo starts off with a large Lemming walking on screen and stamping on one of his smaller cousins. His conscience (in the form of his shadow) gets the better of him, though, and knocks him off a table (sounds strange, but it happens) to reprimand him. The full burden of guilt sinks in eventually and the Lemming walks off to try and repair the damage. A little bit of Lemming magic is called into play and the little one is soon restored to full health, leaving the big guy free from guilt.

Later, as the big Lemming is sleeping, he hears noises that raise him from his slumber. Getting up to see what the fuss is about, he notices the old five-second timer counting down above his head. The operator has turned him into a bomber. The last few seconds tick away, leaving the poor chap to drift up to Lemming heaven, where his earlier act of charity earns him a place with the angels.

Although this may sound like a pretty heavy trip (man), the style of the animation actually makes for very entertaining viewing. The characters have a very bold and brash style, reminiscent of those obscure Hungarian cartoons that are always cropping up on BBC2. A good cartoon and a moral – that's what we like to see around here (as long as it doesn't make us feel too guilty).

AMIGA 86%

Oh dear! That's not really very nice is it? Just because you're bigger than someone, it's no reason to go treading on them

Ah, that's better! Big Lemmings and little Lemmings should be living together in blue-clothed, green-haired harmony

The rewards for the holy-living Lemming is a place in the paradise of Lemming heaven. The angels are waiting...

What's this? Some spooky Japanese trip, perhaps? No, it's just another cartoon image from the *Magad! Megademo*

cont. from p81

producing the superb *Tekk-No* and Italian Bad Boys releasing the *Magad!* demo, you hardly need to go to a nightclub again!

After a bit of a wait while the demo actually loads, an IBB logo appears backed up by a strange bit of bleeping. Don't worry! This is only the intro – things will soon get going. When the demo starts hotting up, the pace of the music increases, introducing strange vocal samples, harsh beats and a load of those weird analogue-filtered noises you hear on many of today's dance hits.

While all this manic music is pounding out of the speakers, a collection of images and animations flashes up on the screen. The artwork has a very Japanese feel to it, with the characters being brightly-coloured and staring out of the screen with ever-so-large eyes. Some of the weirdest characters are the hip-hop black pig and the disco dancing panda. Oh, and what on Earth is that Charlie Chaplin character doing running across the screen? Lord knows – it's all too wacky to understand. Nice and groovy though!

AMIGA 83%

Alien Breed Animation

Amiga • 1421 • 17-Bit
PO Box 97, Wakefield WF1 1XX
☎ 0924 366982

After breaking out of the PD scene to release the full-priced game *Alien Breed*, it's understandable that 17-Bit would want to promote its product as much as possible. This clip is based on the scenario behind the game and has been put together by one of the men responsible for the full product, Amiga animation expert extraordinaire – Tobias Richter.

The style is very similar to Tobias' earlier works (including various *Star Trek* animations and the superb four-disk *Landing*), being a 3D raytraced spectacle with some very nice colouring and shading effects. The animation features the main ship from the game whizzing through an asteroid field before approaching a space station orbiting an oppressive-looking red planet. After a quick bank and roll (we're talking impressive flight manoeuvres here, not a packed lunch), the ship pulls into the landing bay for a touchdown.

Although this may not sound like much, the impressive style of the animation is well worth watching. Unfortunately it will only run on machines with at least 1.5Mb of memory, but if you've got the memory I'd certainly advise you to check it out.

AMIGA 89%

The sleek form of a spaceship as it travels to a violent destination in the *Alien Breed* intro demo

Gotta Go!

Amiga • 2109 • PD Soft
1 Bryant Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS1 2YD
☎ 0702 466933

You know how it is when you just gotta go. I mean when you really, really *have* to. Well that's how the poor doggy in this animation feels. His master takes him out for his daily constitutional in the city park, only to find that it is closed for the day. This sends the poor hound into a frenzy, so

Oh no! The park's closed and the faithful old four-legged friend hasn't had his daily... er.. exersise! What's going to happen now? Hopefully the hound won't go haring off into the city!

he drags his owner off in a mad dash around the city for a suitable alternative 'convenience'.

The desperate dog drags the poor bloke through the city streets in his quest, crashing through heaps of boxes, over manholes and even through the subway. Eventually they find a free hydrant, but in his

There goes a litter bin! What will the council have to say about this chaotic little sprint through the city streets?

desperation, the dog drags his master head-first into a lamp-post. Oh well, when you've gotta go...

The animation style featured on this clip is fairly simplistic, with bold colours and rather small characters, but on the whole the effect is quite

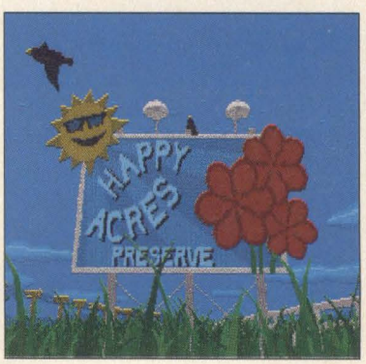
Woah, boy! Watch out for those... CRASH... boxes. Oh well, I suppose that when you've gotta go, you've really gotta go!

pleasing. The only sound is the odd spot effect that punctuates the action, but this is better than having an inappropriate jingle rattling on all the time! Unfortunately, it's also one of those clips that needs 1.5Mb of memory to work, but if you have, it's worth a look.

AMIGA 78%

Buzzed

Amiga • 2086/2087/2088 • PD Soft,1 Bryant Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS1 2YD
☎ 0702 466933



Ah, the countryside! What a pleasant place to spend a summer's day. The trees, the flowers, the (that's enough dreaming - Ed)

One of the most impressive animation styles used in creating Amiga demos is ray-tracing. This enables you to have solid and incredibly lifelike images moving across the screen, with perfect shading and reflections on their surfaces. James Robinson has made good use of this technique in creating the *Buzzed* animation.

The scene starts off with a view of a brightly-painted sign on a nature reserve – the birds flitting happily through the sky. Next the view

AMIGA PUBLIC DOMAIN LIBRARY

AMIGA DEMOS

Some people love them, some people cannot see the point of them, but they are here to stay!
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D 014 CRYPTOBURNERS MEGADEMO 2 Contains some good demos. worth a look.
D 033 TOMSOFT TRIP TO MARS. Vector graphics with a theme *
D 034 BUDBRAIN MEGADEMO (2 DISKS) A classic! Not to be missed but beware of the very risque cartoons.
D 035 CRIONICS MEGADEMO Another great! Famous for the Madonna part.
D 061 POSSESSED MEGADEMO (2 DISKS) Good animated space intro
D 067 MIRAGE MEGADEMO (1 MEG) Yet another good one. Some good FX.
D 078 CRIONICS NEVERWARE (1 MEG) Famed for the brill Madonna graphic.
D 080 KATHARIS MEGADEMO From Poland! Famous X-Copy demo, plus.
D 081 INTUITION MEGADEMO Includes the flashiest ever acild demo.
D 091 FILLET THE FISH Similar to PUGGS, but not as good, still brill.
D 125 DEXION MEGADEMO Underrated at the time. Old but good
D 135 REBELS MEGADEMO Excellent for its time. Good demos.
D 136 ALCATRAZ MEGADEMO Again underrated at the time but very good.
D 138 RAF MEGADEMO (2 DISKS) Still fresh after all this time!
D 141 PHENOMENA MEGADEMO Brilliant group today, always been good.
D 146 RSI MEGADEMO (2 DISKS) An all time great! Still good today! Great music and graphics. A must!!
D 150 IAN & MICK MEGADEMO Inc. classic toilet door demo.
D 153 PUGGS IN SPACE Not generally classed as a megademo, but not to be missed. Great for the kids.
D 160 TRILOGY MEGADEMO (2 DISKS) Includes game, a classic, contains a joke, or is it a bug? You decide.
D 161 PREDATORS MEGADEMO (2 DISKS) Don't miss this one, great sound, graphics and game. Another classic.
D 166 SILENTS MEGADEMO Early Silents, the brilliance is born!
D 180 SCOOPEX MENTAL HANGOVER Another classic which pushed the boundaries of the Amiga light years on.
D 190 RSI CEBIT DEMO. Terrific demo, with the best ever music *
D 223 BUDBRAIN MEGADEMO 2 Not quite as good as the first, stillgood!
D 225 HORIZON MEGADEMO (Sleeping Bag) Superb ray traced anim. Great
D 236 GOLDFIRE ULTIMATE FX....This group continues to improve!!
D 242 3-D DEMOS....Get out your 3-D glasses and CHECK THESE OUT!

POWER DEMOS

(All demos in this section require loads of memory)

P 001/2 WALKER DEMO 1 (2 MEG 2 DISKS)
P 003/4 WALKER DEMO 2 (2 MEG 2 DISKS)
P 021-026 UPGRADE(1.5 MEG 2 DRIVES 6 yes 6 disks!!!) multi part anim
P 010/11 HEADKICK ANIM (2 MEG 2 DISKS plus HARD-DRIVE)
P 012/3/4 STATION AT KHERN (2 MEG 3 DISKS)
P 030/1 DRAGONS LAIR 2 GAME DEMO Superb (3 MEG, 2 DISKS)
P 032/3/4 BUZZED Great Ray traced anim (2 MEG, 3 DISKS)
P 035/6/7/8 AUTOMATED LIGHT (BATTLESTAR GALACTICA) (3 MEG, 4 DISKS)
P 044/5 ANTI LEMMING DEMO (2 MEG)Excellent Eric Shwartz animation.
P 046/7 THE DATING GAME (3 MEG 2 DISK SET) 4 mins long anim!! Truly impressive Eric Schwartz demo
P 050-3 TOBIAS RITCHER: LANDING (4 MEG) (4 DISKS) Brilliant!

AMIGA DEMOS

D 243 KEFRENS - THE WALL.....Great intro! Good graffix, then so so
D 259 PHENOMENA ENIGMA Absolutely Awesome!!! Fantastic, Get it
D 261 SIMPSONS DEMO BY DECAY: Probably the best so far. (1 MEG)
D 264 ANALOGUE MEGA DEMO. Great intro and novel demo selection.
D 265 GALLOW MEGADEMO Purple Haze! Great colours, fair demos.
D 267 BASS MEGA DEMO. Great housey music throughout.
D 269 PULLING THE TRIGGER. Loved the music! Well presented demos (1 meg)
D 294 SILENTS: ICE MEGADEMO (1 MEG) Brill demo, More interesting for coders.
D 295 TOMSOFT: VIRTUAL WORLD (1 MEG) Its a classic. Best this year.
D 296 MAGNETIC FIELDS: HYSTERISIS. Good demo, now loader friendly.
D 299 TAS EGO TRIP (1 MEG) Huge demo, great music and value.
D 700 PMC ALPHA OMEGA Ray-tracing, vectors, excellent.
D 704 ITS MENTAL 3 Sick jokes, cartoons etc. Not for the nervous.
D 705 VOYAGE Cleverly linked demos. Good vectors.
D 706 THE CULT: VECTOR DANCE 2 Good GFX and original vector FX.
D 708 ANARCHY DEMO So new I can't remember what it was called!!
S 393/4/5 DEFINATIVE MADONNA SLIDESHOW...(3 disks) 1 meg & 2 drives
S 441 INVISIBLE WORLD SLIDESHOW. See it and itch. Micro bugs
S 486/7 WWF ANIM AND SLIDES (1 MEG) (2 DISK SET) US wrestling
H 545 JET FIGHTER ANIM...Similar to The Run, but far far better (1 MEG)
H 555 BATMAN THE MOVIE ANIMATION (1 MEG)....Good funny cartoon
H 559 MAGICIAN AND JOGGER ANIMATIONS (1 MEG). .Ray traced anims.
H 560 CAR & UNICYCLE ANIMATION (1 MEG)....Brill anim, a must for fans!
H 564 EVIL DEAD DEMO (1 MEG).. Get the goulies, before they get yours
H 565 RGB & FOCUS (1 MEG).....The famous 'stretching nose' animation!
H 573 TOO MUCH 3D (1 MEG).....The spaceship flies out of the screen!
H 576 IRAQ DEMO Amusing animation of what might have been
H 577 MORE AEROTOONS More in the series of Stealthy cartoons
H 579 MORE CLASSY ANIMATIONS More cute anims from Steve Packer
H 607 WINGS ANIMATION. Brilliant stuff and long too! (1 MEG)Good
H 636/7 STAR TREK MEGADEMO (1 MEG, 2 DISKS) Best of Ritcher!
H 645 YET MORE CLASSY ANIMATIONS 2 Super-Star chuck anims
H 647 VIETNAM ANIM (1 MEG) Another Stealthey-type animation
H 650 OPTIMUM PRESSURE CRISIS (1 MB) Great series of animated slides
H 652 YET MORE CLASSY ANIMATIONS 3 Latest works from Steve.
H 653 YET MORE CLASSY ANIMATIONS 4 .....and more.
YET MORE CLASSY ANIMATIONS 5 Final in the series
X110 FRAXION HORROR Great cartoon graphic demo of nasty stuff.

MUSIC

M 005 MAHONEY & KAKTUS Brilliant music disk
M 030 DIGITAL CONCERT 2: Over 12 mins of mixed house music.
M 200/1/2 SAE AMAZING TUNES 2 (3 DISKS 1 MEG)...Superb!
M 212 MAG FIELDS CHIP FESTIVAL....Another huge collection.
M 216/7 RAF MEGA MIX 2 (2 DISK SET)....Good quality music mix.
M 226 DYNAMITE BEATS 4...Another very classy music disk from Max
M 230 DEXION PARTY MUSIC AND PICCYS....A good disk as always
M 232 ALCATRAZ MUZIC.....Classy presentation, 3 good tracks!!!
M 269 ALCATRAZ MORE THAN MUSIC. Superb.
M 311 LIONS: INXS (1 MEG) 2 tracks of remixed INXS.
M 314 MAG FIELDS: SPACED OUT 1 (1 MB) Beaty, housey music.
M 315 MAG FIELDS: SPACED OUT 2 (1 MB) More of the same. Good.
M 316 LSD: DON'T PANIC (1 MB) Well presented good sounds

ANIMATION SPECIAL!

The works of Tobias Richter. All require 1Mb.
H 002 Agatron Anim. 2 Misc - Jet fighter landing. Basic.
H 003 Agatron Anim. 3 Star Trek - Shuttle fly past.
H 005 Agatron Anim. 5 Star Trek - Klingon fires Torpedoes
H 007 Agatron Anim. 7 Star Wars - Fighter doing loops etc
H 009 Agatron Anim. 9 Star Wars - Fighter flyby. Impressive
H 010 Agatron Anim. 10 Star Trek - Enterprise in dry dock
H 011 Agatron Anim. 11 Tron - Tank vs Deaktivator. Good vectors
H 012 Agatron Anim. 12 Tron Animation. Not one of the best
H 013 Agatron Anim. 13 Misc - Robo 1. A robot waving.
H 014 Agatron Anim. 14 Star Trek - Workbee and Reliant. 3 Shots.
H 017 Agatron Anim. 17 Star Trek - TWOK Animation. Short but OK.
H 018 Agatron Anim. 18 Star Trek - Enterprise fly by. Short
H 020 Agatron Anim. 20 Misc - Huey the helicopter taking off
H 023 Agatron Anim. 23 Star Trek - Fleet Manoevre. Brilliant
H 024 Agatron Anim. 24 Misc - A pen signing 'Tevox'
H 025 Agatron Anim. 25 The Run. Superb car chase. A classic
H 026 Agatron Anim. 26 Misc - A ship rocking at sea. Poss Bug.
H 027 Agatron Anim. 27 Misc - A book opening!
H 028 Agatron Anim. 28 Star Trek - Shuttle and Enterprise
H 029 Agatron Anim. 29 Star Wars - Millenium Falcon in chase
H 030 Agatron Anim. 30 Star Wars - Millenium Falcon goes hyper
H 031 Agatron Anim. 31 Misc - Porsch rising out of a table
H 032 Agatorn Anim. 32 Space - Space probe flying away.
H 033 Agatron Anim. 33 Space - Space probe passing. Short.
H 034 Agatron Anim. 34 Star Trek - The Space Office. A bit short
H 035 Agatron Anim. 35 Space - Space probe flying away.
H 036 Agatron Anim. 36 Star Trek - Bird of pray loop de loop!
H 037 Agatron Anim. 37 Misc - Tobias goes knackers!

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G 117 EATMINE Addictive Boulderdash clone. (not A1500 etc)
G 133 PD GAMES COMPO Good selection inc Welltrix and Breakout.
G 136 DRIP Very tricky painter type game. Almost commercial quality!
G 142 PD GAMES COMPO 3....Great Pacman plus 2 others.
G 143 JEOPARDY (1 MEG)....Version of the board game Risk!
G 152 PD GAMES COMPO 9....Battlemech, Bullrun (Battle Sim) and more
G 154 BATTLEFORCE (1 MEG)....Strategy battle game.
G 159 ANTEP (1 MEG)....RPG also SLOTS, a good car chase game.
G 170 MEGABALL. The ultimate PD Breakout game?
G 171 ZEUS Simple but addictive puzzle game. Great.
G 175 CUBULUS. Great 'Rubics Cube' type puzzle. Excellent.
G 178 WIZZYS QUEST (1 MEG) Super game for PD. (Shareware).
G 179 LLAMATRON By Jeff Minter, blast the beasties (Shareware).
G 180 BLOCK IT 1.2 A tough but addictive puzzle game.
G 181 JT's GAME COMPENDIUM Some old, but most are new.
G 182 MENTAL IMAGE GAMEDISK 1 A superb compilation of new games
G 185 BLACKJACK LAB More serious than a game, inc tutor!
G 187 SUPER SKODA CHALLENGE (1MB) A Lada fun for 4 players.
G 189 NO MANS LAND (1MB) A good 2 player shoot each other game.
G 197 NBS GREAT GAMES VOL 3... Super new games
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U 233 UEDIT Good Public Domain Wordprocessor.
U 267 ELECTROCAD DEMO (1 MEG) Circuit diagram design tool. No save in demo.
U 611 MED 3.11B. Latest version of this great music utility.
U 616 AMIGA FOX Public Domain basic DTP
U 619 MESSYSID. Dreams answered. Working Messydos plus SID.
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U 345 CLIP ART 5 Education, Financial, Art misc, Symbols
U 346 CLIP ART 6 Food and Drink
U 347 CLIP ART 7 Environment, Food and Drink, Health and Home
U 348 CLIP ART 8 Valentines, Weddings, Leisure
U 349 CLIP ART 9 Birthdays, Xmas, Easter, New Year etc
U 350 CLIP ART 10 People (Children, Family, Fashion, Romance)
U 351 CLIP ART 11 People (Men Woman)
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cont. from p82

This elegantly drawn bee is created using some exceptional polygon animation. For the full effect check out the *Buzzed* animation

changes to show a country roadside, complete with a mid-western style country home. A bee hovers into view and flits across the road, only to bash his head on the mail-box on the other side of the street! You can't help but feel sorry for him as his dazed face appears on-screen!

Buzzed is one of the most impressive raytraced animations yet seen on the Amiga, rivalling even the great Tobias Richter's works. The country feel has been captured perfectly, evoking an atmosphere of lazy summer days during the holidays. The bee himself is full of character, having a touch of personality that is often missing from this style of animation. The quality is so good that it looks more like a TV ad for honey or something, so it's the ideal thing for showing off your Amiga's capabilities. Check that you have enough memory to run it though – it gobbles up the bytes!

AMIGA 90%

Ami-FX 4

Amiga • 1180 • Amiganuts
169 Dale Valley Road, Hollybrook, Southampton SO1 6QX

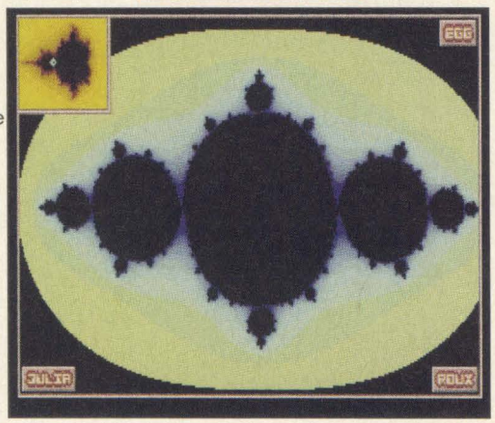
The idea behind the *Ami-FX* series was to set up a kind of information exchange for those interested in fractals (y'know, those pretty little pictures that are produced by some complex mathematical equations that nobody really understands unless they're the sort of person who gets up at four o'clock in the morning to watch the Open University). The point was that people could look at the disks and pass on information and pictures to other interested parties. Unfortunately, the idea never really took off to a huge extent, and all that remains of the idea are a few periodical demo disks that float around the PD scene.

This, the fourth in the range, does contain some pretty nice visuals though, ranging from standard Mandelbrot and Julia patterns to some more obscure frames and animations. *Exploding Eggs* is a kaleidoscope effect as a camera carries out a mirroring effect as it passes into one end of a Mandelbrot and out of the other.

Another piccy worth mentioning is the surreal *Our Lady of Chaos*. This combines normal artwork and fractal patterns to create an ethereal image which works rather well.

Even if you're not particularly interested in fractal mathematics, *Ami-FX 4* is still worth looking at – just for the pretty pictures!

AMIGA 70%



A strange approach to the field of fractals can be found in the shape of this animation from the *AmiFX 4* disk

Gulf War Conflict

Amiga • 2133 • PD Soft
1 Bryant Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS1 2YD
☎ 0702 466933

In the second of this month's Eric Schwartz animations, the Amiga cartoon master takes a retrospective, and, as if you would expect anything else, irreverent, view on events in the desert earlier this year.

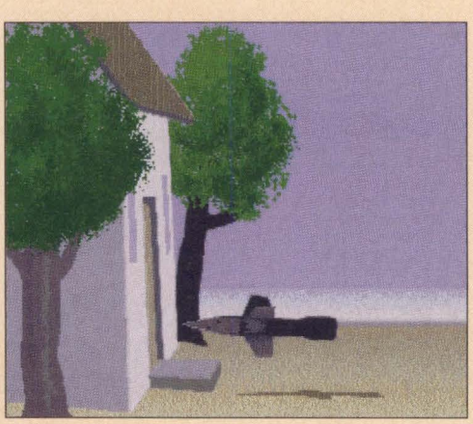
The clip begins with a stealth fighter tracking his foe in the desert, locking in when its computer reveals the correct target. The fighter then zooms in to dispatch its enemy, dropping a powerful-looking bomb while travelling at high speeds. The warhead locks on to its target, skimming past nervous Iraqi tank crews until it eventually reaches a house – at which point it stops and knocks on the door. Who should be inside but Saddam himself, reading the newspaper. Army leader or not, his reply to the knock brings about his downfall as the bomb takes its toll.

A vicious yet poignant reminder of the strife during the early weeks of 1991, don't you agree? Well, maybe not, but it's got the usual Schwartz tongue-in-cheek style that makes his demos such a joy.

Because it takes so long to create an animation *Gulf War Conflict* can hardly be called topical, but nevertheless, another cartoon that shouldn't be missed!

AMIGA 91%

This poor soldier need not worry too much. This shadowy Stealth fighter has a different target in mind



The missile is launched, then he patiently waits outside the door of his target before attacking

I'm sorry, but that kind of attitude isn't going to stop a state of the art fly-by-wire attack missile!

Q. Which is the only Amiga magazine solely dedicated to using the Amiga as a serious computer?

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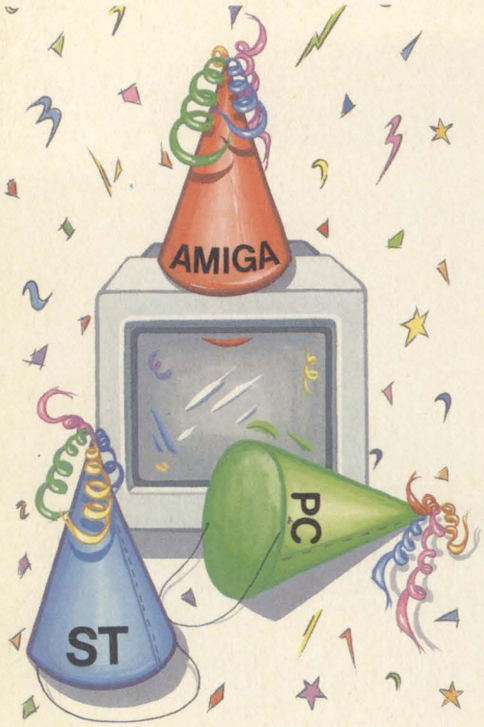


I wanna be like you

Just because a monitor displays a GEM desktop doesn't mean that it's connected to an ST. Thanks to programs called emulators computers are capable of some nifty mimickery. But are any of the PD emulators good enough to fool Tim Howell?

Back in the early days of home computing, the letters pages of the computer press were always full of queries about why people couldn't play Spectrum games on a Vic-20 or an Oric. The problem was, as we all know now, that all computers are not the same – or, in the jargon speak of the replies on those letters pages, they are not compatible.

Processors, sound chips, screen resolutions and all sorts of other things differ from machine to machine. You simply can't use programs written for one computer on another computer.

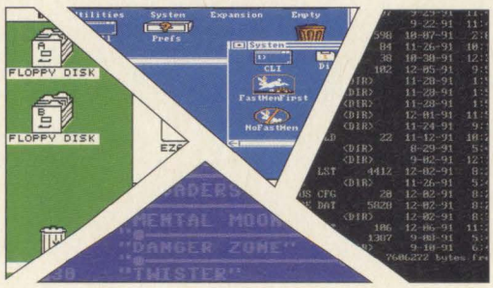
Or at least you couldn't. In these days of whizzy 16-bit machines this isn't necessarily the case. Emulator programs can fool your computer into thinking it's a completely different bunch of bits and bytes, enabling it to run software that has been written for another computer.

There are some limitations, however. While these programs are impressive feats of technical prowess, they can never fully imitate the more complex hardware of another machine. In spite of these limitations a certain, varying degree of compatibility is possible, depending on the quality of the emulator itself.

Emulation explanation

An emulator is a program that enables your machine to run software that would previously only run on a completely different computer. Sometimes hardware is needed to achieve this goal. However, as far as public domain software is concerned everything is done through software.

This software is, necessarily, very complex. It has to emulate the ROMs of the machine it is emulating, which are chips that control the running of the machine. At the same time, emulators have to imitate the hardware of the machine, such as its graphics modes. To be able to write an emulator not only requires a thorough understanding of the computer you want to run the software on, but also the machine that you want to emulate. It's not as easy as, for example, downloading the ROMs of one machine to another; intricate features such as graphics modes need a high level of understanding (on the part of the programmer) to be able to copy.



No matter whether you have an Amiga, ST or PC, an emulator program can make it look and act like another computer

Some computers lend themselves better to emulation than others. For example, the Amiga is able to emulate the ST mainly because they both have the same central processor: a 68000.

For computers lower down the spec-sheet rankings which run at a slower speed (we're talking 8-bit machines), the 16-bit machines have to be able to emulate the processor as well as the other hardware involved. Even though the 16-bit machines are much faster, they are still slowed down by all the extra things they have to do.

Reasons for emulation

A key question that must be asked is why would you want to run software for another computer in the first place? Surely it's better to stick with the best programs for your own machine, rather than get involved with a whole lot of new programs and problems?

For a start, emulators are technically impressive – it's no mean feat to be able to do something like run software written for another machine on your own computer – so out of sheer curiosity it's an area that's worth checking out.

Apart from that, there is some software written for other computers that – surprise, surprise – is actually worth using. The PC is well-known for its applications software, and many of these – even the more complex packages – can be run on a suitably equipped machine. As for the 8-bit emulation packages, these are worthwhile purely for the sake of nostalgia as the programs available for these machines have been surpassed to a certain extent over the last half decade.

Hard questions

So what do you need to emulate? A computer would be a good place to start. The amount of RAM your machine has is another factor that comes into play. As far as emulating the 8-bit machines is concerned, which only came with 48K and 64K of RAM, an Amiga or ST with 512K should should have plenty enough memory to cope with emulating these machines. Other emulations, particularly those for the Amiga and ST that enable you to run PC software, benefit from having as much memory as possible, with 1Mb really being the practical minimum here.

Apart from these hardware issues, there isn't much else that you need that is essential. Again, for

Impossibilities

Some computers, because of their simplicity, naturally lend themselves to emulation, at least as far as the less complex software emulators are concerned. But there are some computers that can never be emulated. It is impossible to ever be able to emulate the Amiga on another machine, as it would require custom chips to be anywhere near being successful.

PC emulation, an external drive is a useful device, as could be a hard drive.

Obtaining software

Once you've got your emulator, the next step is to get some software for it. This is more difficult than it sounds.

For a start, if you're emulating a C64 or a Spectrum you can't just wander into WH Smith's and buy the stuff off the shelves because it comes on tape, 3-inch disk and other formats that aren't compatible with 16-bit machines. The software for the Spectrum and the C64 has to be transferred across to the host machine. In the case of the Spectrum, it is apparently possible to load software directly from a tape deck which is connected to a sound sampler on the Amiga's parallel port. For C64 software the programs have to be taken off disks; this can be achieved by either buying or building an interface that you can use to connect a C64 disk drive to the Amiga to enable the transfer of software.

"Emulators are technically impressive – it's no mean feat to be able to run software written for another machine on your own computer."

Many of the emulators in the public domain come with a few programs just to show what they are capable of doing. These are often in the form of programs written in BASIC and as simple demonstrations of what is possible.

Some of the software that comes with the Spectrum emulator for the Amiga – at least from some libraries – are older commercial programs from years gone bywhich raises an interesting problem: are these programs, such as classic games like *Chuckie Egg*, despite being run on another computer and being several years old, still under copyright? Technically they are, and the copying and transfer of these programs boils down to piracy. Whether the companies who hold the copyright to these programs are bothered doesn't matter; it is still illegal. Be wary of this if you want an emulator, or if you are a public domain library with these older, commercial programs in your collection.

For PC emulators, getting PC software is relatively easy – just pop the PC disk in the disk drive and off you go. Most PC software appears to run with few problems, although programs do run more slowly and if they require more advanced screen modes, such as EGA or VGA, then only more advanced emulators will be able to handle them. In spite of these potential technical inadequacies, the accessibility and availability of PC software makes it by far the best computers that can be emulated. Running ST software on an Amiga using a emulator is also easy; you just stick the disks in the disk drive.

All this was unheard of two years ago and it's no wonder that emulators are attracting a lot of interest. But just how good are the PD versions? *Public Domain* checked them out... PD

ZX Spectrum Emulator (PD)

Amiga • Strictly PD
11 York Place, Bristol BS1 5UT

Out of all the emulators looked at this is one of the most impressive. This isn't so much because of the software it makes available, but because it can load software from this venerable machine at all. If you once owned a Spectrum then this is worth a look as it'll bring back the memories – and we're not talking RAM and ROM here.

This emulator enables you to enter programs in Sinclair BASIC, that weird hybrid of a language that lets you print a command on the screen by pressing a single key, rather than type each command in letter by letter. The full BASIC is supported. However, you cannot save the programs you type in.

As far as other programs are concerned, the *ZX Spectrum Emulator* is capable of loading and running a large variety of commercial programs, some of which are included on different versions of the emulator. Copyright problems aside, these programs, all of which are games, demonstrate that the emulator is indeed a capable tool, even though most of the programs run at a snail's pace.

cont. on p88

With the *ZX Spectrum Emulator*, your Amiga can run Spectrum programs like (the commercial) *Manic Miner*

Getting specific – measuring up to other standards

Just so you can get an idea of how clever some of these emulators are, and the hardware and software they are trying to replicate, here's a run-down of the features they're striving to copy:

	ZX81	SPECTRUM	APPLE II	COMMODORE 64
RAM:	1K (16K with expansion)	16K-128K	64K	64K
ROM:	8K	16K	16K	20K
Processor:	Z80	Z80	6502	6510
Sound:	None	1 channel	1 channel	3 channels
Graphics	64 x 48	256 x 192	282 x 192	320 x 200
No of colours:	2 (black and white)	8	15	16
Storage:	Cassette tape	Tape /3-inch disk	5.25-inch disks	5.25-inch disks
Comments:	Infamous for its lifeless membrane keyboard, black & white graphics and lack of sound, the ZX81 occupies a unique position in computing history. It gave many people their first look at home computing as it was so inexpensive, costing only £49.95 for a 1K machine.	Early models of the Spectrum have the infamous rubber-keyed membrane keyboard. Typical of a Sinclair machine, BASIC commands are inputted by pressing a single key rather than keying out the whole command. Imensely popular.	Its distinctive angular, cream-coloured case was a familiar sight in schools for many years until overtaken by the BBC Micro. Impressive software support in the past has now dwindled to virtually nothing.	The C64 was one of the first 'home' computers to have a real keyboard. It has unfriendly in-built BASIC and is well-known for its huge base of software, particularly games, and its amazing sound chip, SID.

cont. from p87

It's worth looking at whether you're a Speccie fan, you want to show off the capabilities of your Amiga, or you want to give it a mild case of schizophrenia. Spooky.

AMIGA 86%

BBC Emulator (PD)

ST • GD735 • Goodman's PDL,
16 Conrad Close, Meir Hay Estate, Longton,
Stoke-on-Trent ST3 1SW
☎ 0782 335650

Instead of being a full implementation of a BBC Micro, enabling it to load all its programs, this just lets you enter programs written in the popular BBC BASIC. This form of BASIC is widely used in schools and is considered a particularly good implementation of the language, which indicates that this particular program could be handy for students. It seems comprehensive enough, offering all of the BBC's different graphic modes.

The *BBC Emulator* is worth a look if you want an implementation of BBC BASIC, but it isn't capable of loading and running other programs, such as those written in machine code. Maybe one for the kids who have a BBC at school and who want to practice BASIC at home (who knows, homework might take on a whole new meaning!)

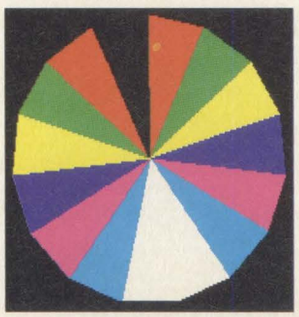
ST 67%

Benefits of emulators

- You'll be able to run programs that you never thought you'd be able to
- You'll be able to impress those people who reckon your machine can only run its own programs

Drawbacks of emulators

- No emulator can ever be fully compatible with the machine it is attempting to emulate.
- Often software runs considerably slower on an emulator than it would if run on the 'real' machine.



A BASIC listing such as the one below, created for the BBC Micro, will run perfectly on an ST using the *BBC Emulator*. The results of this listing can be seen on the left

```
   10*FX34,0
   20DIM COL(7)
   30COL(0)=0:COL(1)=4:COL(2)=1:COL(3)=5
:COL(4)=2:COL(5)=6:COL(6)=3:COL(7)=7
   40RA=1400
   50MODE4
   60PRINT "Pie chart:"
   70MOVE 640+RA*SIN(0),512+RA*COS(0)
   80FOR A=0 TO 2*PI STEP (2*PI)/15
   90GCOL 0,1+(A/((PI*2)/15))
  100MOVE 640,512
  110PLOT 85,640+RA*SIN(A),512+RA*COS(A)
  120NEXT
  130A$=GET$
  140CLG
  150MOVE 640+RA*SIN(0),512+RA*COS(0)
  160FOR A=0 TO 2*PI STEP (2*PI)/128
  170GCOL(A/((PI*2)/16)),7
  180GCOL 0,COL(RND MOD 7)
  190PLOT 85,640+RA*SIN(A),512+RA*COS(A)
  200MOVE 640,512
  210PLOT 85,640+RA*SIN(A),512+RA*COS(A)
  220NEXT
Escape
```

Because the Amiga's related to the C64 – they're both Commodore machines – you'd at least expect them to be able to partly communicate with each other; or, in other words, the mighty Amiga should be able to run the 64's software, right?

Not necessarily. Even the commercial emulators that have attempted to emulate the C64 on the Amiga haven't been all that successful, mainly because when they have worked, they haven't been all that fast. Thankfully, the *A64 Emulator* doesn't fall into this category. Sure, it's slow and all that, but with the addition of a special cable (which you get when you register this piece of shareware) you can connect a C64 disk drive to the parallel port of the Amiga, enabling you to load 'real' 64 programs into its powerful cousin.

As *A64* comes on the PD disk, it can't load C64 programs – to do that requires the cable. However, you can type in your own programs in the C64's unfriendly version of BASIC. The author claims that most of the C64's memory allocations have been successfully translated to the Amiga, and this appears to be the case.

One of the main reasons for emulating the C64 must surely be to run the vast range of games available for this popular machine. Unfortunately, in spite of this programs undoubted capabilities, its limitations prevent the running of games simply because they become so sluggish. *A64* is good at

A64 Emulator (Shareware)

Amiga • Disk 600 • Vally PD,
PO Box 15, Peterlee, Co Durham, SR8 1NZ
☎ 091 5871195

Emulators not included...

While the majority of emulators available in the public domain have been covered in this feature, there are a few others available which, for various reasons, didn't arrive in time to be reviewed. In spite of this, it seems as if at least a couple of these are worth a look.

On the Amiga there is a *QL Emulator* available which emulates the machine that marked Sinclair's semi-successful foray into 16-bit computing. This is available from a number of libraries, as are two accompanying disks containing programs that run in combination with the emulator.

And for the ST there is a *ZX81 Emulator* which is also available with supporting software. This program emulates yet another Sinclair machine, this time the black and white ZX81. This is the machine that largely contributed to making Sir Clive Sinclair the legend he is today and is well worth looking out for, particularly if you once owned one of these black beauties...

Hardware hindrances

There are three main areas that are crucial to emulation:

PROCESSOR – This is easier to recreate on some machines than others as often the machines have the same processors. The Amiga and ST, for example, both have 68000 processors, making the transferral of software a bit easier. In the case of other processors, such as the Z80 used in the Spectrum, it's a lot harder to do and even though these older, less powerful 8-bit processors run at a slower speed than their 16-bit equivalents, the 16-bits can still only manage to run at a snail's pace when emulating them.

GRAPHICS – These also vary depending on the nature of the original machine. The ability of a machine to display the graphics of another not only depends on the resolution of both machines, but also the way the graphics, colours and modes are positioned in the memory of the machines. On the surface it appears that the Amiga with its 4096 colours and 640 x 400 pixel resolution would have no trouble simulating a less spectacular eight-colour 256 x 192 Speccy. As is usually the case, things are never that easy. Because each individual pixel has a separate memory address this also has to be taken into account, and virtually copied byte for byte in the machine that is doing the emulating. Then the colours also have to be emulated, right down to the correct shades and intensities.

SOUND – Also incredibly difficult to copy, sound is one of the features that is often overlooked as far as emulators are concerned, simply because it can't easily be simulated. Even the simplistic beeps of the Spectrum have to be ignored on more powerful machines like the Amiga for similar reasons to those for graphics, except that it is even harder to replicate the characteristics of sound chips. But then, how many Amiga owners will miss listening to single-channel sound on their stereo beasts?

An impressively presented program, the *A64 Emulator* enables you to run programs creatd for the venerable Commodore 64

what it does and is probably the best such emulator available for the Amiga – commercial or PD – but it can never replace a real C64.

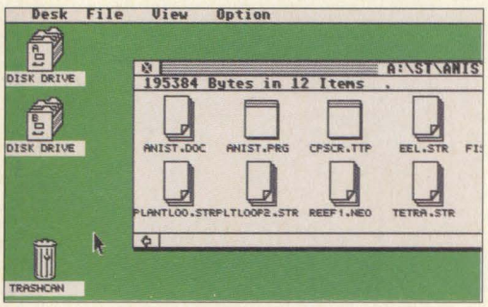
AMIGA **72%**

ST Emulator (PD)

Amiga • Digitz
PO Box 144, Mexborough, South Yorkshire S64 9SL ☎ 0709 571748

This is one of a couple of ST emulators available for the Amiga in the public domain; this one in particular is a translation of a German program that is also available from various libraries.

From the start this program demonstrates that it is quite capable. At one stage we even had the ST's C64 emulator running on the ST emulator on the



No, it's not an ST screen. Well, it is, but it's the *ST Emulator* running on the Amiga that accurately works like the ST's TOS

Amiga! But, as with most emulators, the emulation is not perfect, and while it appears to run most programs, software that stretches the ST.

This emulator works by effectively copying the TOS (Tramiel Operating System) and using the 68000 processor, which is common to both machines, to interpret and understand the software. One problem with this way of doing things is that TOS is not public domain, and the view of the writer of this program is that since Commodore doesn't mind its Workbench disk being copied then Atari won't mind its operating system being copied either.

When an ST program crashes while the emulator is running the familiar ST 'bombs' are displayed on-screen.

In terms of what the emulator looks like on-screen, it has the ST's familiar green desktop. The mouse pointer moves sluggishly around the screen, living up to the reputation of emulation programs being slower than the computers they're emulating.

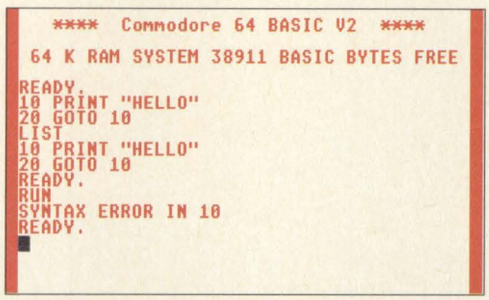
AMIGA **78%**

As mentioned above, there is a German version of the ST emulator which doesn't appear to be significantly different to the English version and is less understandable. This can be obtained from:
Crazy Joe's, 145 Effingham Street, Rotherham S65 1BL ☎ 0709 829286

C64 Emulator (PD)

ST • GD735 • Goodman's PDL, 16 Conrad Close, Meir Hay Estate, Longton, Stoke-on-Trent ST3 1SW ☎ 0782 335650

One of the many emulator programs on this particular disk, the *C64 Emulator* is the worst of the lot. Totally useless, and not even capable of



The *C64 Emulator* for the ST not only looks like a poorly colour-co-ordinated Commodore 64, it's as much use as a dead one!

understanding the simplest of BASIC programs. Even

```
10 PRINT "HELLO"
20 GOTO 10
```

doesn't work, which renders any purpose it may have had redundant.

That said, it *almost* looks like a 64...

ST **5%**

Emulators on the PC

If you're a PC owner worried that there doesn't seem to be any emulators for your computer, this isn't strictly the case. The problem is that the ones that are available are limited to older computers and operating systems. One example of this is Digital Research's CP/M operating system, emulators of which are available in several guises, depending on what version of the OS is being emulated.

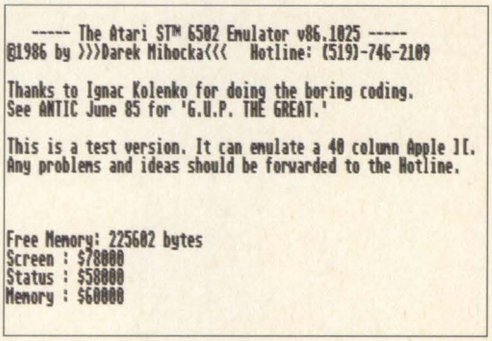
If you do get hold of one of these emulators, the next hurdle is getting hold of some software to run with it – you'll have to contact the user groups that deal in CP/M software and not only find some software, but make sure that it comes on the correct format disks. CP/M was once *the* major operating system, but nowadays it's virtually redundant.

As for the Amiga emulator on the PC, it's a joke...

Apple II (PD)

ST • GD735 • Goodman's PDL, 16 Conrad Close, Meir Hay Estate, Longton, Stoke-on-Trent ST3 1SW ☎ 0782 335650

Very popular in schools way back in the early 1980s, the Apple II gave many people their first look at BASIC, and even their first look at a new-


----- The Atari ST™ 6502 Emulator v86.1025 -----
©1986 by }}}Darek Mihocka{{{ Hotline: (519)-746-2109
Thanks to Ignac Kolenko for doing the boring coding.
See ANTIC June 85 for 'G.U.P. THE GREAT.'
This is a test version. It can emulate a 40 column Apple][.
Any problems and ideas should be forwarded to the Hotline.
Free Memory: 225602 bytes
Screen : $78000
Status : $58000
Memory : $60000

By using a program that emulates the 6502 processor, the *Apple II Emulator* makes the ST act like the classic 8-bit machine

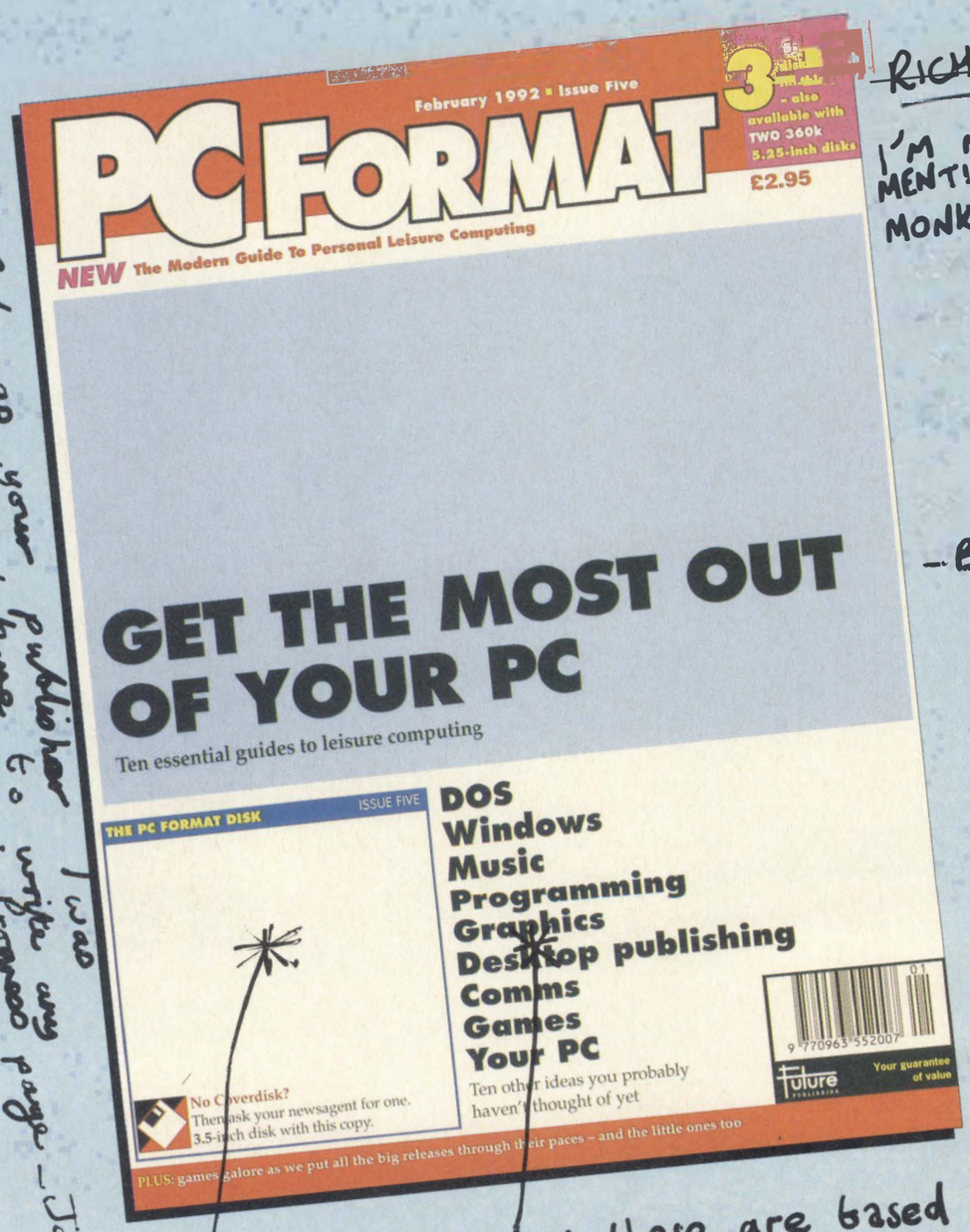
generation computer.

Now this venerable machine has been emulated, albeit to a very limited extent, on the ST. The emulator is supposed to support Applesoft Basic, but as far as this goes, it doesn't seem to be the case. Basically, the emulator seems to be an extension of the 6502 processor emulator, with a front-end added that is supposed to add the capability of handling the BASIC. No documentation is provided with the program so it's difficult to tell if the program isn't working properly, but all the signs show that it simply doesn't work. Possibly worth a look if you want to experiment with 6502 emulation.

ST **32%**

PC FORMAT

The next issue of *PC Format* is numbered, imaginatively, 5 and will be appearing on every good newsagent's shelves on January 23.



RICHARD
I'M NOT MENTIONING MONKEY
-BOB.

Bob - as your publisher I was wondering if I have to write any comments for the Work in Progress page - Jane.

Martin - all of these are based on the same style of design and are two-page guides - Tim.

BOB - I'M TRYING TO DECIDE BETWEEN TWO PLAYABLE PREVIEWS, I'LL LET YOU KNOW WHICH IS BEST SOON - JASON.

For the finished version of all this and more, make sure you get issue 02 of *PC Format* on Janu[illegible]

ISSUE 02

Contents subject to change without notice, because you never know when something is going to go horribly wrong.)

Ten blinding mice!

We've got 10 top-quality Naksha mice up for grabs, and to win one all you have to do is answer six simple questions...

You can't get by in life with just any old mouse. You need one you can trust, one that is sensitive to your needs, one that won't conk out after a couple of rigorous bouts of word-processing or alien-roasting.

That's exactly the sort sort of mice that we're giving away in this month's competition. Those kind people at Naksha have agreed to give away no less than 10 of their best mice to some very lucky readers.

And these aren't just ordinary mice, they're attractive and well-designed peripherals, virtually guaranteed to make your computing life much easier, whether you're playing games, editing text, drawing in a computer art package or whatever else.

Just to remind you how good they are, we gave the PC Version an earth-shattering 85 per cent in this month's mouse round-up. Take a look at pages 69-73 if you want to find out why it scored so well.

Naksha makes mice that are both PC and ST/Amiga compatible, so the competition is open to all of you. Just remember to tell us what computer you have so that if you are one of the lucky winners we can send you the right model.

So, what do you have to do to get your hands around one of these ergonomically-excellent mice? Easy! Just answer the following questions, write them on the back of a postcard or a sealed-down envelope and send them to the competition address. Don't forget to tell us which computer you own. Good luck!

1 Which huge animal is traditionally portrayed as being scared of mice?

A The brontosaurus
B The rhinoceros
C The elephant

2 Which famous mouse keeps residence at Disneyland?

A Mickey Mouse
B Mighty Mouse
C Dangermouse

3 How many balls does a mouse have?

A Three
B One
C Two

4 If you met a mouse and it tried to talk to you, what would it say?

A Woof!
B Squeak, squeak!
C Polly wants a cracker!

5 Which country does Edam cheese come from?

A Holland
B Iceland
C Edamland

6 Why is a computer mouse called a mouse?

A Because it squeaks when you roll it over a surface
B The mouse was created by Professor Ivan D Mouse, PhD
C The main part and lead of the computer mouse resembles the body and tail of the rodent variety

Jot your name, address, the type of computer you have (very important) and the answers on the back of a postcard (or a stuck down envelope) and send it to:

I don't want to swallow a mouse,
Public Domain,
29 Monmouth Street,
Bath BA1 2DL

● *The winners of our competition in issue one will be announced next issue. (We know we said it would be issue three, but we were only a bi-monthly then!)*

The rules:

Employees of Naksha, Future Publishing and Rentokill can't, under absolutely any circumstances, ever enter this competition (apart from employees of Rentokill if they promise to be nice to their rodents if they win).
The winners will be the first ten owners drawn out of the Ed's hat (and it's a very big hat, 'nuff said), and the lucky winners will have their names printed in glorious black and white in issue five.
The closing date for this compo is 29th February 1992.
And you can only enter once. Multiple entries will be torn up and unceremoniously digested by our paper recycler.

Problem Solved!

Want to digitally re-master your old 78s? Need to find the best mono emulator for your ST? Then write to PDQ, the computer which has answers to these and a million and one other questions. Every month we feed it with your PD problems, and after a spot of digital digestion it spits out the solutions...

Send your techie teasers to PDQ, *Public Domain*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

EXTRA FISH AND T-BAGS – PD TIPS

Q I have recently bought a Fish Disk 269 and a T-Bag 35. Unfortunately I have run into a few problems.

On Fred Fish 269 there is a *ChessTutor* file and it requires me to load an 'Extras' disk in any drive. (Because I have an extra disk drive). I was wondering which disk to take out to be replaced by the Extras disk.

On T-Bag 35 on some of the utilities it asks to access them from the CLI (Command Line Interface). How do I do that? Thanks for your help.

Paul Lord, Basildon, Essex.

A *The 'Extras' disk that* ChessTutor *requests is, in fact, the disk that contains AmigaBasic, needed by* ChessTutor *as it is a program written in Basic. Unfortunately, Commodore hasn't been including Basic on the Extras disk with Amigas for quite some time, which means that if you haven't got AmigaBasic then there's not much chance of you being able to run the program.*

If, on the other hand, you have got the Extras disk which contains AmigaBasic, then take out any of the disks you have in your drive – which will probably be a copy of Workbench or the Fish Disk itself. The Amiga will ask you to swap disks a couple of times and all should be well.

Some programs can only be accessed by the CLI. To do this, reset your machine and pop in your Workbench disk. Then, click on the disk icon and the the System folder. You'll see a file labelled CLI. Click on this to bring it up.

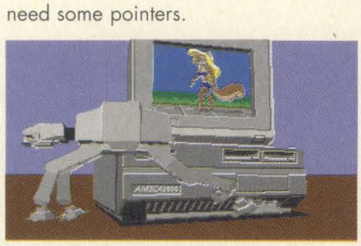
To run your program (you say you have two disk drives – this makes it a great deal easier), put your Workbench disk in your internal disk drive and the T-Bag disk back in the other. Open up the CLI as explained above, and then, for the sake of convenience, get a directory of the other disk by typing `DIR DF1:` *to see what's on the disk. To run the programs on the disk more easily type* `CD DF1:` *to access the disk in that drive, and then* `CD <directory name>` *to access the directory that contains your program. Use DIR again to see what is in that directory and then type the name of the program to run it. (If you have a single drive the process is practically the same, except that it involves a lot more disk swapping, so be patient.)*

EMULATION POSSIBILITIES

Q I have recently been playing around with the ZX81 emulator for the ST and I have found it very good indeed. It has brought back many fond memories of the times gone by, when computers were owned by real enthusiasts and not gamesters like they are today.

My problem is that I don't know the limitations of the program. The text files are in German. I feel, however, a translation would not answer my questions. It seems that some of the sample programs are in machine code with the data stored in REM statements (as it should be). This would mean that any program that could be entered into a ZX81 could also be typed into the emulator.

What would really satisfy my needs would be if there was a way of loading data directly, either from tape or directly between the two computers. I am willing to work hard at this, building hardware if necessary, but I need some pointers.



Want to emulate the Amiga on your PC? No chance, matey! The Amiga's custom hardware is just too complex

Perhaps if you cannot help me then you could tell me of someone who could. If any of your readers have a similar interest then I would love to hear from them.

Andrew Miller, Livingston, West Lothian.

A *Emulators are becoming incredibly popular among users of public domain software, and a number of machines can emulate others – see our feature on page 86 for the full run-down.*

The Spectrum emulator for the Amiga supposedly enables you to load software directly from tape through a sound sampler, but as yet there doesn't seem to be a way of doing this with ZX81 software on the ST. As far as programs go, it appears that you are limited to ones that you can type in yourself, whether they are written in BASIC or machine code. And even then they're not guaranteed to run.

In theory it could be possible to interface an ST with a ZX81, but whether the emulator could load the transferred programs is another matter as it depends on in what format they've been transferred across.

And while the idea of loading and running ZX81 software on your ST sounds attractive, going to all the effort and expense of building a custom interface seems of dubious value – you should be able to pick up a ZX81 for less than a fiver these days.

A BLACK AND WHITE VIEW

Q Having been a reader of your sister magazine, *ST Format*, for some time, and having recently become interested in public domain software, I bought your first issue with great anticipation. I was not disappointed! But could you please tell me which is the best PD mono emulator currently available for the ST?

Mark Blunden,
Queens Park, Bournemouth.

A *A mono emulator is a program that will enable you to run programs written to use Atari's SM124 high resolution mono monitor on a colour monitor or TV; these can usually only display programs in low or medium resolution. There are a number of mono emulators available and most of them are much of a muchness, but one of the best available is on disk CH001/U from:*
Captain Hack's PD, 19 Latimer Drive, Laindon, Essex SS15 4AD ☎ 0268 416888

VINYL RE-MASTERING

Q I am searching without success for a software/hardware package for my PC/AT with which I can digitally remaster a couple of thousand 78 rpm records.

Perhaps you can help? (Wouldn't it make a good article for your new magazine?)

Peter Forshaw,
Wombwell, Barnsley.

A *By 'digitally re-mastering' I take it you mean something like digitising or sampling the music so you can hear it on your computer.*

These two techniques effectively act like a form of tape recorder, but instead of recording to tape they save the information to your computer's memory or a disk. This is done through a combination of hardware and software. The hardware, called a sampler, does the job by turning the analogue information – that is, the sound waves – into digital information that the computer can then deal with. The software is in charge of doing the recording and setting recording levels etc.

Ultimately, the music that you sample would be no clearer to listen to than it would be through your stereo. The sound could be 'tweaked' in some respects to get rid of crackles etc. but this would be time-consuming and probably not all that successful.

Another problem is the amount of storage space that would be needed to

save all these records, especially several thousand of them. The higher the quality of sound that you want, the more memory and, as a consequence, disk space it takes up. So for even a few records we'd be talking several megabytes of information, which would be very costly to store on hard disk. While it is possible that floppy disks could be used – depending on the length and quality of the sample – you would soon build up a hefty stockpile.

Still, it is possible to transfer the sounds from your 78s to a computer, but the extent to which you can do this is dependent on how good a quality you want the samples to be, and how much you are prepared to spend on the storage.

AMIGA ON A PC?

Q I am looking for a good PD Amiga emulator for the PC since there seems to be a distinct lack of public domain software for the PC and a wealth of the stuff for the Amiga and ST. Could anybody help me?

Also, does anybody know of a good PC library for the PC?

Sandy Noble,
Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

A *While it is possible to run PC software on the Amiga, I'm afraid the reverse is not the case and never will be. The Amiga has a wealth of custom graphics and sound chips that enable it to achieve the effects for which it is well-known. Because of the complexity of these chips, and the fact that the Amiga uses a different processor (a 68000 instead of an 8088 or 80x86-series as used in PCs), it is impossible for the PC to run any Amiga software. The situation is the same for ST software as well.*

Contrary to what you seem to think, there is, in fact, a considerable supply of PC public domain available, covering the whole spectrum of software.

As for recommending a PC library, there are so many good ones around it would be unfair to single out any single one. Instead, have a look at the advertisements in every issue of Public Domain. *If the companies stock PC software they should be able to help you out.*

Open to the public

While PDQ has a brain the size of a planet, even it gets stumped sometimes (an accident involving a cup of black coffee and a drunken Editor has resulted in the loss of valuable memory chips). The result is that its knowledge of the PD world is sadly no longer absolute.

This is the section where we give all of you an opportunity to answer other readers' questions which it was just not feeling up to at the time.

If you have the answer to any of these problems then drop PDQ a line at: I want to help, *Public Domain*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Go on, show us what a clever clogs you really are...

● I have recently started an HND Computer Studies course in which I will be gaining programming experience in the languages ADA and COBOL-85. Do you know of any public domain compilers for either of these languages (As I understand it, the program can be written as an ASCII file and then compiled. Is this correct?) I have looked through several PD catalogues, but although compilers for Pascal, the language used on courses last year, are available, I can find none for either ADA or COBOL. I need a program to run on a 1Mb Atari STFM with one double-sided drive, connected to a colour television.

Mark Blunden, Queens Park, Bournemouth

● I have noticed that many Amiga public domain catalogue disks now use a standardised format and screen layout. Once loaded a row of function keys appear on the left with their relevant options on the right. This saves double-clicking on loads of icons from the Workbench screen.

How is this type of disk created? Is there a special program that does it? If so, where can I obtain a copy?

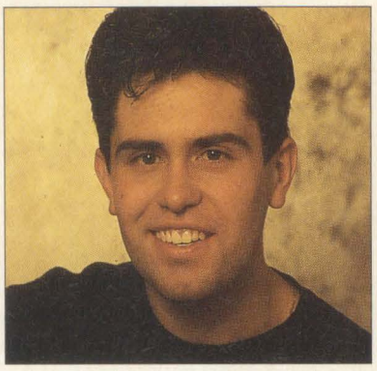
I'm interested in creating a hints disk and therefore your comments will be gratefully appreciated.

Stuart N Hardy, Wales, Sheffield

● And finally, a quick question that Dave 'thickie' Golder, our Production Editor would like to get the answer to (after spending far too much time trying to find out the answer himself when he should have really been making us all a cup of tea).

Who said: 'All stories must have a beginning, middle and an end, but not necessarily in that order'? It's been bugging him for ages

Home & Education



REVIEWS INDEX

1900s USA (ST)	96
About the House (ST)	100
Balloon Speller (PC)	94
Cabby (ST)	102
Compu-Chef (PC)	98
Crossword Designer (ST)	95
Cyclist's Companion (PC)	96
Dress-Me-Up (PC)	94
Exploring Music (PC)	95
German Language Tutor (Amiga)	102
Golf Score Analyser (Amiga)	100
I-Ching (Amiga)	98
Leaner (PC)	101
Maths Wizard (Amiga)	101
Me First (ST)	100
Molec 3D (Amiga)	95
Park (ST)	101
Robot Words (ST)	100
Storyland 2 (Amiga)	96

Whether you want to lose weight, mend your bicycle or learn a foreign language the public domain has something to help you out. It's chock-a-block with idiosyncratic programs that would never get a commercial release but are still essential to someone, somewhere. Dave Golder checks the latest miscellaneous batch of PD pick 'n' mix...

Dress-Me-Up (Shareware)

PC • 8796/PF • Softcell
25 Maywood, Drunna
Pontyclun CF7 9PT
☎ 0443 2386

I don't know about *Dress-Me-Up*, but the writer of this fiasco, Christopher G Gunn, needs a good dressing down for releasing this pile of baloney into the shareware market.

Aimed at a very young age group it involves dressing up some rather hideous-looking creatures that would probably give most kids nightmares. It should be simple – you point and click at doors and draws to open them and select the clothes you want. Unfortunately, it's horrendously complicated and very unfriendly. For example, when a cupboard door opens it reveals a number of different coloured clothes. You might think that you just click on the colour you want and your 'creature' will don that colour shirt, jacket, pair of shoes or whatever. Wrong. The colours actually correspond to certain styles of clothing and you're supposed to remember what they are.

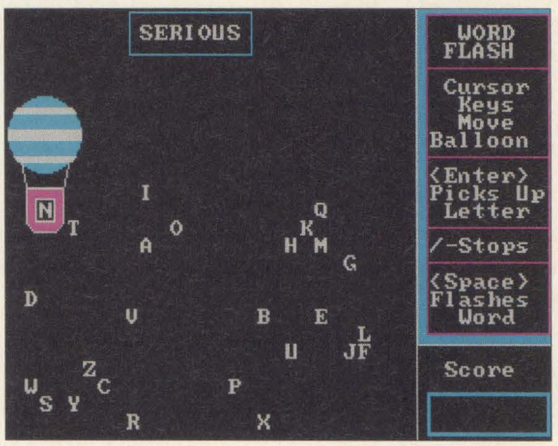
When a cupboard opens it looks as if you're going to have a wide selection of clothes, as they are packed full of clothes. Wrong again. You can only click on the blue or green selection in each case because the program only has enough memory to cope with two styles of clothing at one time. If you want any more styles you have to send away your shareware registration fee to get them, but even then you can only use two styles at any one time.

'But don't worry' the rather dull documentation file tells you. 'There is a paint facility that provides endless combinations.' Well it might if you could actually make sense of it. It has to be one of the most complicated 'simple' paint features I have ever known. No choose colour, point, click and flood-fill here. You're more likely to get a message saying, 'Border not found'. It's about as friendly as a rabid rottweiler on heat.

To its credit, the program is very colourful – the paint facility features a garish tartan and some vile green stripes which are quite novel – and kids could be attracted to it initially because of this. But the fact that prodding about with the mouse produces very few results – you really do have to resort to checking out the documentation file – will probably put most of them off after a few minutes.

PC 32%

Oh my God! Fashion victims! Unfortunately it hards to create anything remotely resembling tasteful with *Dress-Me-Up*. In fact, it's hard to anything at all, it's so difficult to use



***Balloon Speller*: I'm sorry, but if that balloonist is trying to pick up the letters to spell out "SERIOUS" he's not starting very well by picking up an 'N'. He needs some help from you, I think**

Balloon Speller (Shareware)

PC • EDU 005 • Fantasia Shareware, PO Box 1231, Clutton, Bristol
☎ 0761 453716

Up, up and away in my beautiful balloon... Or at least it would be if I didn't keep bumping into these stupid letters all the time. Best thing to do, I suppose, is collect 'em and see if I can do something useful with 'em. How about making some words?

This is the premise of *Balloon Speller*, a severely cut-down, but still worthwhile shareware version of a full-price game. You fly around a letter-populated sky in your cursor-controlled balloon, picking up letters in the correct order to spell a word displayed at the top of the screen.

The concept is very simple but the game remains effective as a piece of educational software. The main drawback with this shareware version is there are no lists of words supplied as standard with the program; someone has to enter a list of 10 words every time *Balloon Speller* is loaded. This isn't a particular hassle; the problem is that the person inputting the words has to be able to spell in the first place.

There are three variations of the basic game: in one you have all the letters of the alphabet on-screen; in another you only have the letters of the word you have to spell; and in the final one you aren't allowed to see the words you have to spell. In all of them them, if you successfully spell a word, you are rewarded with a short burst of *Somewhere Over The Rainbow* (some reward, huh?)

The graphics are poor – I can't imagine them getting away with them in a full-priced game – and the cursor controls are a bit sluggish. But it's a doddle to use, so kids should get into it easily enough, and it should keep their interest for just about long enough to make the shareware registration fee worth paying.

PC **64%**

Molec 3D (PD)

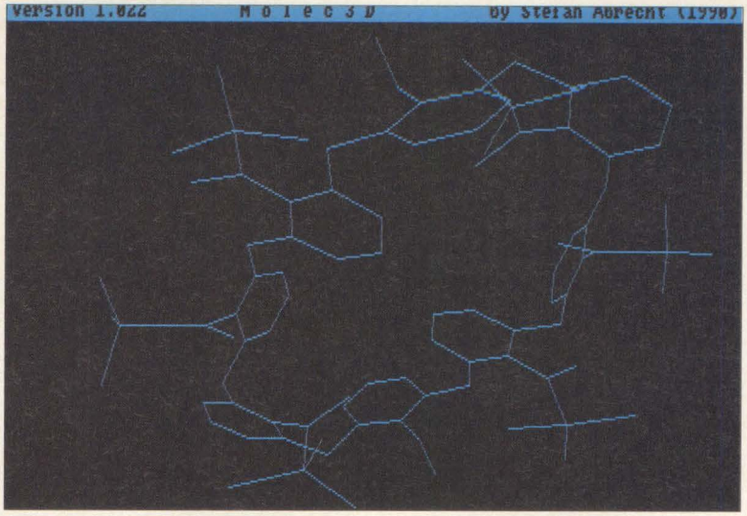
Amiga • Fish 482 • George Thompson Services, Dippen Lodge, Dippenbradick, Arron KA27 8RN ☎ 0770 82234

A bit of an odd beast this. A program for creating pretty three-dimensional pictures of atoms which actually works better as a cheap way of producing natty little wire graphic animations which would be great for use with a genlock to produce video effects.

The way it is supposed to be used is like this: you load up an atom from pre-loaded co-ordinate files, rotate it in wire mode to the position in which you want it, then select colour mode to produce a stunning, colourful picture of an atom. There are various options available to get your atom looking just as you want it, and it all works fairly well, but it's all a much of a muchness.

Luckily the author has left instructions in the documentation on how to set up a co-ordinates file, which in theory means that you should be able to create all sorts of weird shapes that you can then load up and rotate. A mate of mine already has plans to include some of these animations in future video projects.

AMIGA **69%**



You can actually produce 3D representations of molecules with *Molec 3D*, but that's pretty boring compared to the fact that in wire mode you can rotate the things through two dimensions

Exploring Music (PD)

PC • Advantage • 56 Bath Road, Cheltenham, Glos GL53 7HJ ☎ 0242 224340

Music has never been one of the strong points of the PC. I mean you don't see too many music demos for the old IBM and compatibles, do you? So I approached this program with bemusement and scepticism.

Good job I did. It really didn't reveal any unplumbed depths of the PC's sound chip.

The menu looks impressive on first viewing. There are 14 items on it! Gosh. Right, what's this one called Star Wars? Oh. It plays the *Star Wars* theme in a harsh one-note-at-a-time style. The screen doesn't even move away from the menu. Oh, this is getting on my nerves. Let's try and stop it. Hmmm. ESC doesn't work. Nor does any other key. Only one thing for it. Reboot.

Unfortunately a good deal of the other items on the program are the same. There are some variations. *Flashdance*, for example, displays the lyrics so that you can sing along. Karaoke on the PC! What a concept. Others actually open up to another menu that contains another selection of tinny songs for the PC to (try to) play.

The only items of real note are

cont. on p96

The puzzle program that's never stuck for words

Crossword Designer (PD)

ST • South West Software Library, PO Box 562, Wimbourne, Dorset BH21 2YD

Crosswords always seem like a good way of filling up fanzines or newsletters, but it's only when you start trying to put one together you realize how difficult the task is. Trying to find words that fit into the grid you've created is a nightmare. *Crossword Designer* won't exactly make the job a sweet dream, but it does eliminate a lot of the hassle.

Designing the grid is simple. It presents you with a completely blank grid and you click in the squares you want blacked out. Because crosswords are traditionally symmetrical along a diagonal line, the program automatically blacks out the other relevant squares. When you're happy with the grid, the program will fill in the numbers for you.

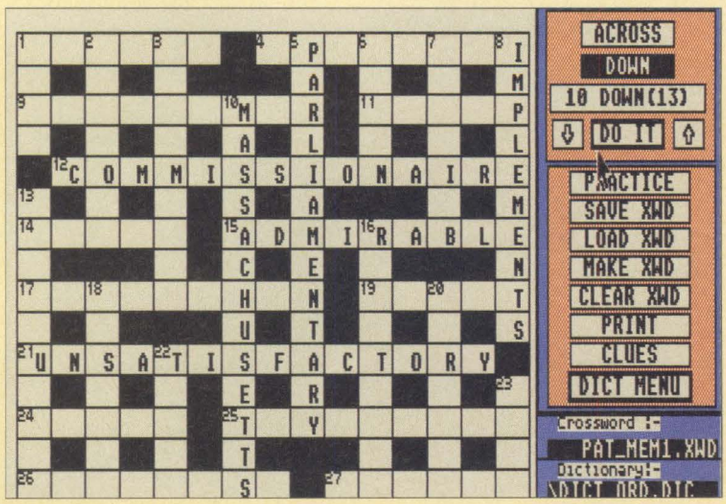
Next you have to decide what words you want to put in and this is where *Crossword Creator* really comes into its own. It has an in-built dictionary and a search facility that will not only find words of a certain length, but ones with letters in a certain combination. So, looking for a seven-letter word with third letter 'p' becomes no chore at all. (This is also a handy utility for solving crosswords as well).

When you've filled in the whole grid, the final task is to type in the clues, save the whole kit 'n' kaboodle, or print it out.

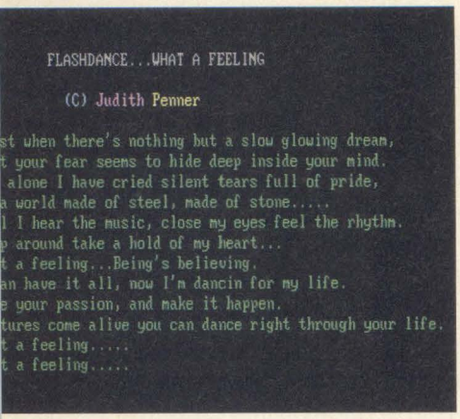
Needing at least 1Mb to run it and medium resolution, *Crossword Designer* is not the friendliest of programs. You need to have a good consultation with the documentation before embarking on the creative process. And graphically it's not inspired. But it is fast, and comprehensive; you can build up your own custom dictionary, for example, and it there is also a facility to help you out if you want to include multiple word answers.

A mite unfriendly, perhaps, but *Crossword Designer* is still one of the best of its kind.

ST **70%**



I know it looks like I've only half-completed this crossword, and I have. But not filling it in, but creating it, which, with *Crossword Designer*, is a doddle. The program does most of the hard work


FLASHDANCE...WHAT A FEELING
(C) Judith Penner
st when there's nothing but a slow glowing dream,
t your fear seems to hide deep inside your mind.
alone I have cried silent tears full of pride,
a world made of steel, made of stone.....
l I hear the music, close my eyes feel the rhythm.
around take a hold of my heart...
t a feeling...Being's believing.
an have it all, now I'm dancin for my life.
e your passion, and make it happen.
tures come alive you can dance right through your life.
t a feeling.....
t a feeling.....

cont. from p95

A computer innovation! *Exploring Music* offers you Karoake on the computer

Piano, which displays an on-screen piano keyboard which you can play using the top row of the computer keyboard. And sound effects, which contains some actually quite good examples – I mean, wow, the telephone actually sounds like a telephone and not a chirping cricket.

Please don't let this put you off the rest of Advantage's *Exploring* series, however, as this is by far the worst. For masochists only.

PC **25%**

1900s USA (PD)

ST • South West Software
PO Box 562, Wimbourne, Dorset BH21 2YD

For any GCSE students of 20th Century American history, or indeed anyone else who wants a general introduction to the subject, this pair of disks is an excellent place to start, much better than stuffy old text books.

Basically a database, it is very attractively designed. The main menu screen contains a double-decker icon bar, each icon representing a certain subject – the depression of the thirties, wars, population, presidents, civil rights, the lot. Though all of them are text-reliant, they are presented in a variety of forms which prevents reading the information from becoming a chore, with copious amounts of clicking and interactivity required. There is one section which is just a list of major dates, but it should please those who have a more Conservative approach to the teaching of history.

Graphics are, sadly, kept to a minimum; about the most complex examples are the icons themselves, though there are some pretty blocky maps. However it makes good use of colour and the layout is always clear.

The writing-style is very concise and manages to convey an impressive amount of information even though it does little more than skim the surface of most subjects; it serves as a well-researched appetiser for those wanting to look into the subjects in more depth.

And just to make sure that you've been paying attention the program also includes a fairly simplistic, but still quite fun, multi-choice quiz section. The one major annoyance is that being on two disks, if you have only one floppy drive, there is a hell of a lot of disk swapping involved. Sometimes the program asks you to load the second disk and when you do you are presented with one solitary screen and a request to put the first disk back in the drive. What a pain!

But if you think your drive is up to the punishment, then 1900s USA is well worth a look.

***1900s USA* is a better way of learning American history than two hours in a dull classroom on a wet Wednesday**

ST **72%**

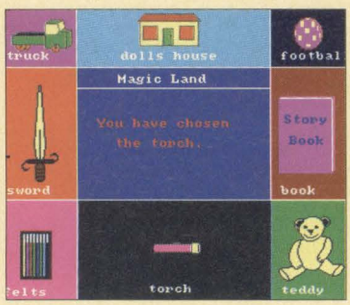
Cyclist's Companion (Shareware)

PC • 2923 • Public Domain and Shareware Library
Winscombe House, Beacon Road, Crowborough, Sussex
☎ 0892 663298

If you're in the position where you can work on your bicycle and watch your

cont. p9

Adventures in Toy Land, and Animal land, and Witch Land, and...



Make sure you choose the right toys before you embark on *Storyland 2*

Storyland 2 (PD)

Amiga • 1206 • Amiganuts United, 169 Dale Valley Road, Hollybrook, Southampton SO1 6QX

'Do you love animals? (Y/N)'

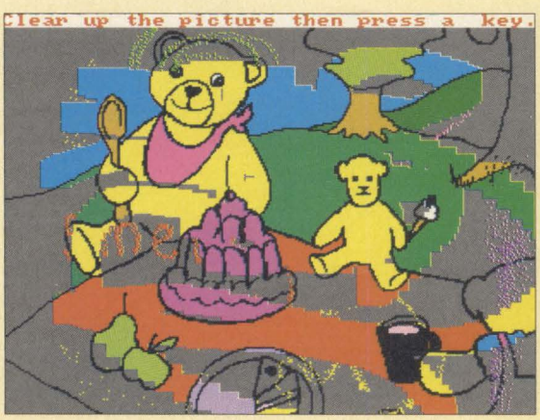
This is the first thing that confronts you on loading this program, and I wouldn't press N if I were you, because, you see, this is an anti-vivisectionist kids' adventure and only 'children who love animals can play'. (If you do press NO you get dumped back out to the Workbench screen.) This may sound a bit heavy, but don't worry. *Storyland 2* is simply excellent. It does have a message but it doesn't get in the way of the game (and the message benefits because of it). It's an innovative program that uses the structure of a fairytale adventure combined with elements of other popular software for kids, such as computerised colouring books and jigsaws.

The basic story is that the a wicked witch is bringing doom and gloom to various mystical lands. She has scrawled graffiti all over Toy Land and taken all the colour out of Animal Land. Now with the magic crystal she plans to take over the universe (or something like that).

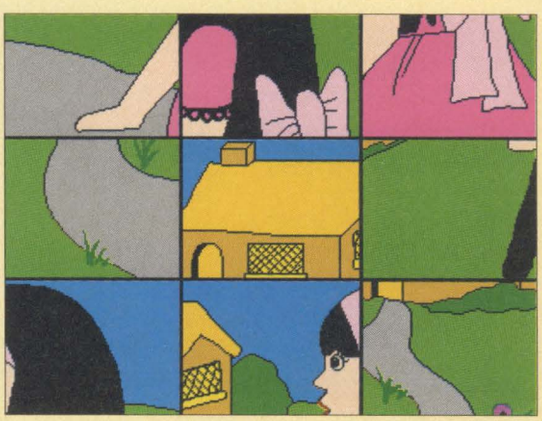
You have to visit all these mystic lands and sort out their problems, but not in the usual adventure manner. For example, you bring back the colour to Animal Land by painting it in with your felt-tip pens that you picked up in your toy room earlier in the adventure – at this point the program changes to a fairly basic flood fill-type paint package. Basic maybe, but in the context of the game it works brilliantly, especially when you fill in the sky, and it comes complete with stars.

The program is full of simple delights like this that should keep kids enthralled for hours. The adventure elements require some working out, but the effort is well rewarded. *Storyland* hardly features state of the art graphics but what it does have is charm loads of it.

AMIGA **94%**



Aside from being a straightforward adventure *Storyland 2* contains some surprises, such as this section where you have to rub out graffiti



Thanks to the evil witch things do get a bit muddled at times and it's your job to sort things out, in this case literally

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DB4 – Mass appeal Mailing List Manager
DB53 – CATALIST v3.27 list manager

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GPC126 – T-ZERO adventure v1.03
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GPC138 – Tear Down The Wall!
GPC35 – Amy's First Primer
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GPC132 – Blackjack! v2.20D
GPC136 – Picture Puzzle v1.2
GPC134 – Moraff's SUPER BLAST
GPC135 – Moraff's ENTRAP v2.0
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LPC69 – DOSREF 19 technical reference

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SI-9 – Crossword Creator v4.3
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UPC129 – 4DOS v3.02
UPC25 – FlexiBak Plus v1.0
UPC144 – Turbo-Copy v2.01
UPC142 – FluShot+ v1.7 anti-virus
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WPC101 – Galaxy Lite v1.7
WPC114 – Word Fugue v2.00 (2)
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WPC70 – Hypershell v4.0 (3)
WPC117 – RUBICON DTP package v2.2c (2)

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The Association of Shareware Professionals
ASP Approved Vendor
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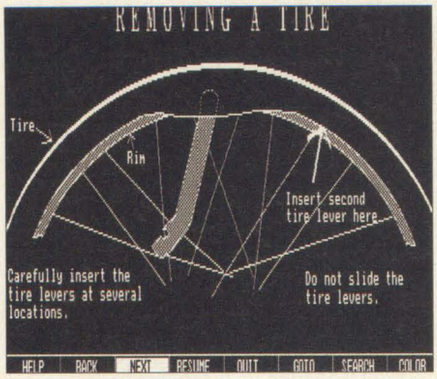
cont. from p96

computer's monitor at the same time then *Cyclist's Companion* could be useful.

There are two programs on the disk – *Bikelog* and *Maintenance Tutor*, and though they are both about bikes they don't compliment each other too well, though both of them have their individual strengths. *Maintenance Tutor* is aimed at the cycling novice, while you really need to know your Shimano gears from your three-speed wheel to make pedal or saddle of *Bikelog*.



You might not have a computer in your garage but *Cyclist Companion* is still good for occasional reference

Maintenance Tutor is a very thorough program absolutely packed with information on how to keep your bike on the road. Illustrated with copious amounts of simple-but-clear diagrams, it covers virtually every aspect of bike maintenance, from various ways to cope with a puncture to replacing gears. It does get a bit technical in its language from time to time, and the sections could have been a bit better presented, but it serves its purpose admirably enough.

Bikelog suits a computer better, being a system which you can use to keep track of your cycling exploits. You have to feed in some very detailed data about your bike – including the type of forks and pedals it's got – as well as personal details and information about the distance you have ridden, and your aims. It'll probably take you about two hours just to fill it all in.

Then you can use it to provide a simple to fill in log book of your rides. You can also keep track of your heart rate and colorie consumption, even setting yourself targets. All the information can be sent to your printer.

You would have to be a real enthusiast to get anything out of *Bikelog*, but if you are the it's pretty useful to have.

PC **69%**

I Ching (PD)

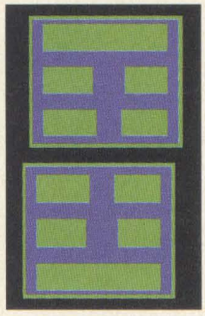
Amiga • Asgard Software, 20 Langdale Drive, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF2

I Ching sticks are an ancient oriental system similar to astrology or Tarot cards which can be used to predict the future and also reveal the deepest secrets of your psyche. You throw some sticks onto the ground and, though they seem to have landed randomly to you, an oracle trained in I Ching will be able to read all the signs they are giving off.

Quite how this program simulates all this is beyond me. For one thing, there don't seem to be any sticks involved. It just asks you to ask it a question, thinks for a couple of seconds, then throws out some pseudo-oriental bit of wisdom.

For example I asked it, "How big will my Christmas pay rise be," to which it answered, "HSIAO KUO –

con p1



I think, but I may be wrong, that these are supposed to be computer representations of *I Ching* sticks. Doesn't really work, does it?

Hey, what's cooking? Software that serves up some really hot recipe ideas

Compu-Chef (Shareware)

PC • 2930 • Public Domain and Shareware Library Winscombe House, Beacon Road, Crowborough, Sussex ☎ 0892 663298

Compu-Chef really shows the way in which a computer program can be a massive improvement over a boring old book. Basically a database of recipes, it's overflowing with features that make it an absolutely essential program for any cookery dabbler lucky enough to own a PC (and able to stick it in the kitchen somewhere where the Fairy washing-up liquid won't get into its chips).

It gets off to a good start by looking excellent. The graphical presentation is superb seducing you to have a poke at the keyboard to find out what the program can do. And it can do a lot.

Basically it is a recipe database. There are 24 recipes supplied as standard with the program though you can easily add more of your own (up to 100, 000 if you've got a hard disk that can handle it). They pop-up on screen in a split window with the ingredients on the left and the method on the right. You can enlarge either to fill with window with the function keys.

When you call up a recipe you enter how many people you are cooking for and the program automatically alters the quantities to suit. The program treats the figures a bit arbitrarily, though; it works them out on the basis of 'half a pound of sugar for a cake for three people, therefore one and a half pounds of sugar for a cake or nine people'. The theory is sound, but as any cook will tell you, it doesn't always work in practice.

As well as ingredients and method, you can mark down how long it will take to cook and how many calories a serving contains. The recipes can be easily edited if you suddenly decide, say, that you prefer using treacle to honey in this recipe, or that ten teaspoons of curry powder is just too much for your bowels – and other people's noses – to handle.

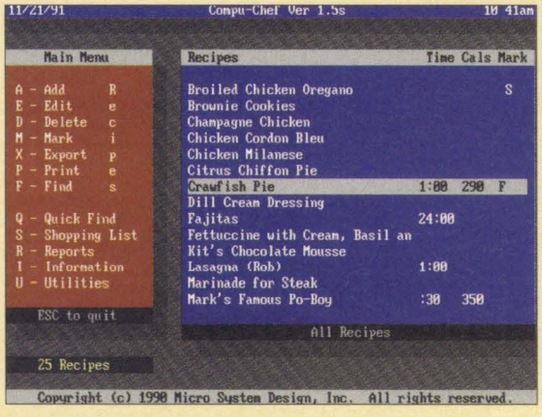
Another excellent feature is the *Shopping List*. If you decide to make Crawfish Pie, for example, you just select the recipe then select the *Shopping List* feature with the function keys and all the ingredients will autotomatically be copied to a separate 'List' file. This list can then be printed out and used as a shopping list. But don't worry if you already have half of the ingredients, or you need to buy some apples and a jar of figs as well, because the list can be edited separately so that you can add or delete any items you want (or don't want).

And if all this weren't enough, see if these features whet you appetite:

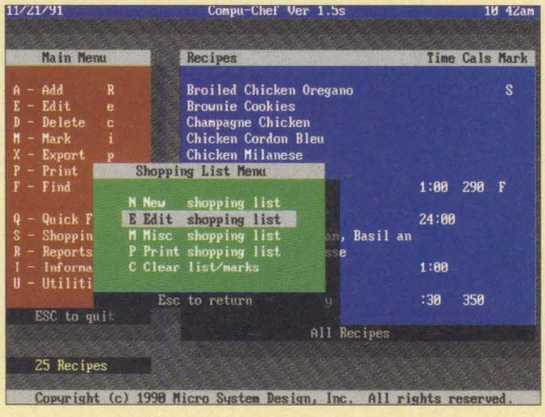
- Quick Find, so that you can instantly find any recipe
- A directory of cookery terms
- A measures conversion table
- A nutritional and calorie guide
- A rather silly list of kitchen etiquette which basically says that the chef is always right
- A marker utility so that you can highlight your favourite recipes

All in all, a very tasty program, that leaves *Delia Smith's Cookery Course* looking like *Blue Peter* cookery spot.

PC **92%**



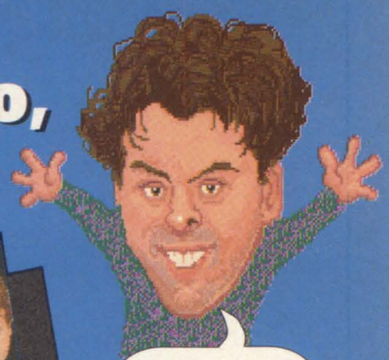
What shall we have for dinner today then. How about some nice crawfish pie? I'll just check out the recipe in *Compu-Chef* first



Hmm. I forgot to buy any crawfish, which is a bit of a drawback. No worry. I'll just add it to the shopping list and print the whole lot out

TOTAL!

It's 100% Nintendo, it's on sale now...



Wowee! A mag all about Nintendo – and nothing else! It's fab 'n' brill 'n' wonderful (and it's got me in it!)

TOTAL!
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Got an NES or a Game Boy? This is the *only* mag for you, because it's the *only* mag dedicated to Nintendo games.

...and you've never seen a mag like it!

cont. from p98

THE POWERFUL SMALL. The small get by. A time of small success. Do not undertake anything of importance now. Aim at that which is reachable. February." I take it that means forget about that CD player I had my eye on. As to what the month at the end of each answer means, I haven't the foggiest, but didn't the ancient Chinese have different months to us?

I admit that the music is quite stirring and suitably mystical sounding. But what this program could do with, aside from some decent graphics, is a documentation file, of any kind. As it is, *I Ching* little more than an interesting curiosity.

AMIGA 48%

Robot Words

(Licenceware)

ST • South West Software Library • PO Box 562, Wimbourne, Dorset BH21 2YD

Don't be fooled by the name. *Robot Words* is Hangman, but probably the craziest version you'll ever see.

That newsreader looks a bit pale, as well he might, because you failed to win at *Robot Words* and now the metal maniacs are invading!

The basis of the game is the classic scenario. You are presented with a series of blank spaces, each space being one letter of a word. You have to nominate a letter; if the word contains that letter then it appears in the correct space. If not then... ah, now this is where things differ from the traditional game we all know and love so much.

In the common old boring hangman, parts of the doomed execution victim are drawn in bit by bit. But in *Robot Words* it's parts of a huge, monstrous robot that appear nut by bolt. And if he is complete before you get the word right, it's not him that's doomed but you, and the rest of the world!

This is because there is a race of robots which is intent on destroying the planet and you have to stop them with your lexicological skills.

The game opens with a superhero inviting you to play the game in a rather fine digitised voice. "G-g-g-g-get ready," he says in the best Paul Hardcastle remix tradition. Then it's in to the game.

You enter the letters by mouse using an on-screen QWERTY grid which is a bit cumbersome, but not a major drawback. As an educational game, though, perhaps it might have been better to arrange the letters alphabetically.

If you get the word right before the Robot is complete, you are presented with a short news broadcast in which the superhero returns to repel the robot invaders. If you fail, then then the broadcast tells a very different story...

In terms of presentation *Robot Words* is excellent. The graphics are fun and the digitised voice is used creatively (not the cod-american drone you usually get). It only suffers from being such a thinly-disguised version of a very familiar game.

ST 76%

Golf Score Analyser

(Shareware)

Amiga • ADP 189 • PD Soft 1 Bryant Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS1 2YD
☎ 702 466933

Busy executives just haven't got time to keep their golf scores. They've got time to play 18 holes twice a week, but keeping the scores is just too much hassle. Which is a shame, because where's the evidence when they want

A little knowledge goes a long way

The Knowledge Vine is a coding group that has produced some top-notch programs aimed at very young kids. The programs are designed to help them get used to the computer as well as being handy introductory educational games. A selection are available on a compilation from Caledonia.

About The House

(Shareware)

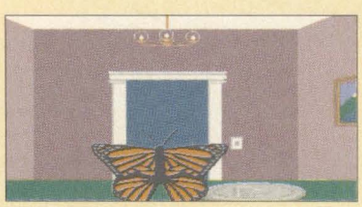
ST • ED0009 • Caledonia 250 Oldtown Road, Hilton, Inverness IV2 4PT
☎ 0463 225736

About the House is subtitled, 'A children's adventure,' which is a bit of a generous description. You might have visions of *Five Go Creeping About A Haunted House with Lots Of Creepy Passages, Find some Secret Treasure And Expose The Local Vicar As A Satanist.* What it's actually about is a butterfly flying around someone's house.

You control the splendid-looking butterfly with your mouse as it flaps in and out of rooms, opening windows and doors (this is one strong lepidoptera, man) and generally poking his proboscis into anything and everything.

There are areas of the screen which you can click on to make things happen. So if you click on a light switch, the lights come on or turn off. Click on a painting, and the picture changes. Click on a clock and it chimes. If you click on a door or window then it opens and you can go through it.

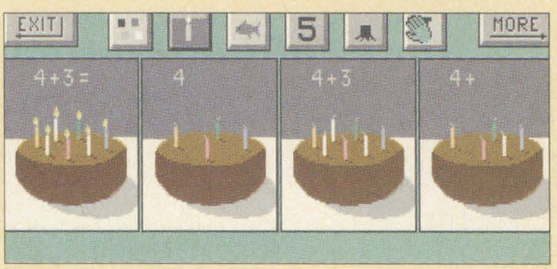
Among the highlights are a piano that you can play by clicking on the notes, a screen which you can fill with dozens of fluttering butterflies and a great sunset sequence complete with cute little buzzing fireflies.



***About The House* contains without doubt one of the prettiest cursors ever designed**

The animation is very smooth, the graphics are basic but colourful and the program is very responsive to your mouse movements and clicking. The sound is a bit uninspiring, though there is a pretty good barking dog. This really is an excellent program, and worth getting the disk for alone.

ST 90%



Someone is abviously having troubles with their maths and it's your job to help them out by putting these pictures in the right order in *Me First*

Me First (Shareware)

ST • ED009 • Caledonia 250 Oldtown Road, Hilton, Inverness IV2 4PT
☎ 0463 225736

Some wise person once said, "A story has a beginning a middle and an end, but not necessarily in that order," which just about sums up *Me First* perfectly.

The game is based on a very simple concept. At the top of the screen are four pictures that form a story, but they are not in the correct order. You have to click on them in the right order. When you click on the picture that you think comes first it moves to the bottom left of the screen; the second one you click on moves down next to it, and so on until all four are lined up at the bottom of the screen.

If any of the pictures are in the wrong place they move back up to their original position and you get a second chance. When you get the order right, you are presented with a short, and petty jerky, animation of the story.

Though the program has a fairly profession look, the pictures are fairly unexciting, the

Score Analysis Over 2 Rounds At BATH TUB

Hole	Yard	Par	Eag	Bir	Par	Bog	Dbog	Oth	Average Score
1	230	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	4.0
2	150	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	4.0
3	300	5	0	2	0	0	0	0	4.0
4	225	4	0	1	1	0	0	0	3.5
5	120	3	0	0	0	1	1	0	4.5
6	320	4	0	0	1	1	0	0	4.5
7	350	5	1	1	0	0	0	0	3.5
8	200	4	0	0	1	1	0	0	4.5
9	315	4	0	0	1	1	0	0	4.5
Out	2210	35	1	4	4	8	1	0	37.00
10	175	3	0	0	1	1	0	0	3.5
11	287	4	1	0	1	0	0	0	3.0
12	305	5	0	1	1	0	0	0	4.5
13	190	4	0	0	2	0	0	0	4.0
14	230	4	0	0	2	0	0	0	4.0
15	150	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	4.0
16	245	4	0	1	1	0	0	0	3.5
17	287	5	0	2	0	0	0	0	4.0
18	400	6	1	0	0	1	0	0	5.5
In	2269	38	2	4	8	4	0	0	36.00
Out	2210	35	1	4	4	8	1	0	37.00
Tot	4479	73	3	8	12	12	1	0	73.00

A familiar sight to all golfers ransferred to the Amiga. A customisable golf score card is just one aspect of *Golf Score Analyser*

to brag about their exploits on the links down at the club. Now *Golf Score Analyser* is here to solve all their evidential problems.

The program takes a little time to set-up, but it's all very straightforward (the secretary could probably do it copying the information from a golf score card). When you first load it you are presented with a completely blank screen, except for a message asking you to use the menu bar. A bit unfriendly, perhaps, but it can be forgiven because the author admits that it's a bit unfriendly and that he'll try harder in the upgrades and because the rest of the program is just so good.

So you call up the menu bar with a click of the mouse button and then select 'New Course'. This gives you a grid which will be familiar to any golfer; it is basically a blank score card but a bit blanker than normal; there's no details about hole lengths or pars. That's because you have to fill them in yourself along with your scores for each hole.

Once you have entered the information about one course, though, it is held in the program's memory so that every time you play that course you can recall it from memory and add your new scores, including details of the date on which you played. If you regularly play more than one course then you can set up separate records for every course.

But the program does more than just keep a record of your scores: it analyses them as well. It keeps averages of bogies, birdies, eagles, pars and averages for each hole. It also calculates something called an erratic score (apparently golfers will know what this is!)

The program can print out, but it's a bit erratic and hardly produces elegant results. Still, improvements are again promised for the updates.

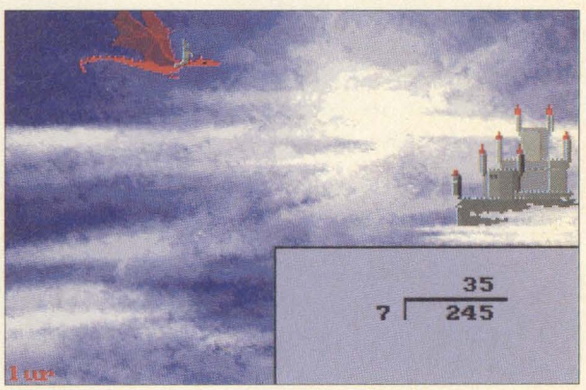
On-screen, however, it looks very nice, with tasteful use of colour and clearly laid-out grids. It does what it does well enough, with no frills, and should keep statistically-minded golfers happy enough.

AMIGA **72%**

Maths Wizard (PD)

Amiga • 2068 • Virus Free PD
Virus Free PD,23 Elborough Road, Moredon, Swindon, Wiltshire SN2 2LS

Maths is dull, as every schoolkid knows. And so do a lot of PD programmers. That's why they spend so much time trying to make the subject more interesting by writing 'fun' maths programs. The best ones wrap up the maths in interesting and exciting gameplay so that the kids don't suspect that someone's trying to teach them something that's good for them. Others, like *Maths Wizard*, are based on the incorrect assumption that if it looks good, the kids'll be fooled.



***Maths Wizard* looks stunning, there's no doubt about that. But to play, it's about as exciting as being stuck in a lift with John Major**

Take the *Troll's Toyshop* section of the program, for example. It is set in a Toyshop presided over by a brilliantly-drawn troll in a fetching red jump suit, Looks good, but the actual game is little more than a series of maths problems wrapped up in little stories. You know: 'Mary ate ten apples before dinner and eight apples after dinner. How Many did she eat?' You get all this stuff in primary school maths lessons and kids'll see the similarity straight away.

The other three sections are pretty much the same. *Dragon Race* isn't a race at all since there are no competitors and no time limit. You just answer maths problems and with every correct answer the dragon gets closer to a castle. In *Wizard's Flash* the sums appear from out of a cauldron and the wizard waves his wand and causes an explosion every time you get one right.

Elf's Equations is slightly different and the best of the lot. An elf goes fishing for some fish that all have numbers tattooed on to their sides. One of them carries the correct answer to a maths problem. If you help the elf catch the right one he joyfully does a few one-handed handstands.

This program looks so good it's a shame that the games are a bit of a let-down. It's a piece of educational software that seems to have replaced style for substance and though kids might be impressed by the graphics at first, they'll soon become bored with it.

AMIGA **67%**

background screen colours are very dull – all gungy greens and greys – and the music is downright irritating. On the plus side, there are 24 different stories covering an impressive range of topics, including some simple mathematics.

ST **65%**

Park (Shareware)

ST • ED009 • Caledonia
250 Oldtown Road, Hilton, Inverness IV2 4PT
☎ 0463 225736

The butterfly cursor makes its come-back in *Park*, a very simple but refreshingly original program.

You are presented with a shot of a fairly empty park, and your job is to fill it. There are certain hot spots which you can only see when you click the mouse; they show up as white-outlined boxes. If you click on one of these hot spots then something magical will happen inside it (well, magicalish).

So, for example, a man appears walking his dogs; the flag on the flagpole cycles through various patterns; kids jump on to the roundabout; trees sprout from nowhere; all that sort of thing.

It's great fun... for about five minutes, anyway. The main problem is that when you've played it once, it really holds very little surprise and I can imagine that even little kids would get fed up after not very long. Another problem is that there are horrible streaky lines on the pictures which appear to be some kind of coding mistake. They don't stop you from being able to play the game, but they make it irritating to watch the screen.

ST

This park may seem a bit empty, but click on certain hot spots and it'll soon fill up (and the flag might change, too)

Leaner (Shareware)

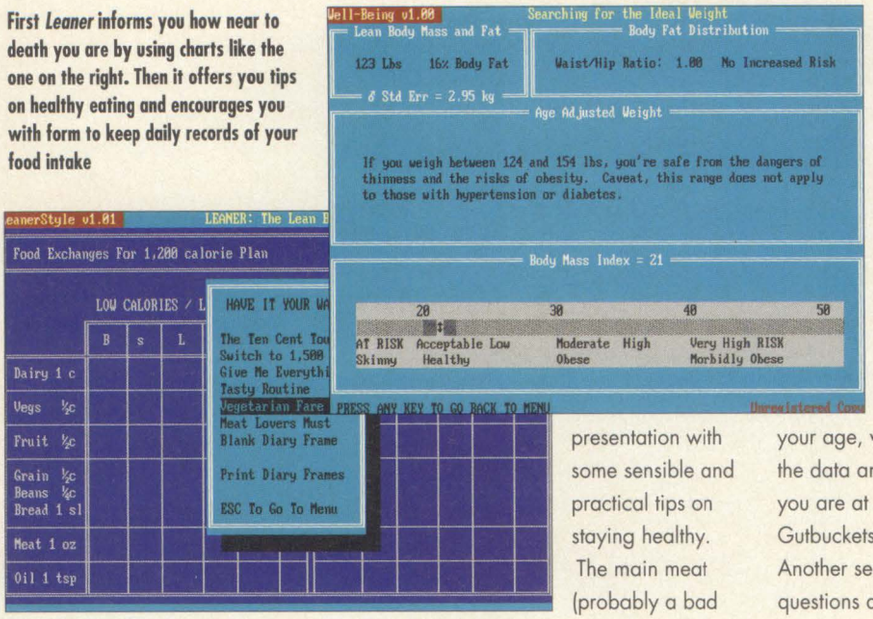
PC • 4288 • Softcell
25 Maywood, Drunna Pontydun CF7 9PT ☎ 0443 238630

As we all know the way to man's heart attack is through his stomach, and healthy eating has become all the rage. We now know, because earnest-looking doctors keep telling us on Breakfast TV and late night chat shows, that dieting isn't just about losing weight for reasons of vanity, it's about living longer.

And that's what *Leaner* aims to help you to do – live longer. It does come across as incredibly faddish, but manages to combine a very impressive

cont. on p102

First *Leaner* informs you how near to death you are by using charts like the one on the right. Then it offers you tips on healthy eating and encourages you with form to keep daily records of your food intake


Well-Being v1.00
Searching for the Ideal Weight
Lean Body Mass and Fat
Body Fat Distribution
123 Lbs 16% Body Fat
Waist/Hip Ratio: 1.00 No Increased Risk
δ Std Err = 2.95 kg
Age Adjusted Weight
If you weigh between 124 and 154 lbs, you're safe from the dangers of thinness and the risks of obesity. Caveat, this range does not apply to those with hypertension or diabetes.
Body Mass Index = 21
20 30 40 50
AT RISK Acceptable Low Moderate High Very High RISK
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eanerStyle v1.01
LEANER: The Lean E
Food Exchanges For 1,200 calorie Plan
LOW CALORIES / L
B S L
Dairy 1 c
Vegs ½c
Fruit ½c
Grain ½c
Beans ½c
Bread 1 sl
Meat 1 oz
Oil 1 tsp
HAVE IT YOUR WA
The Ten Cent Tou
Switch to 1,500
Give Me Everythi
Tasty Routine
Vegetarian Fare
Meat Lovers Must
Blank Diary Frame
Print Diary Frames
ESC To Go To Menu

cont. from p101

presentation with some sensible and practical tips on staying healthy. The main meat (probably a bad choice of word) of the program is contained in the rather hefty, but well written, documentation file which is sensibly referred to as a User Guide, which immediately makes it seem less of a chore to read. It also contains a number of interactive sections which make the program much more fun.

One asks you about your age, weight, height etc, processes the data and then tells you how much you are at risk from heart disease. Gutbuckets prepare for a shock! Another section of multi-choice questions determines how much stress you are under and whether you are susceptible to depression.

But apart from depressing you with these facts, the program goes to great lengths to encourage you to change your eating habits, not drastically, but gradually. It even provides forms which you can print out which help you keep track of your daily intake of calories, along with suggested guidelines.

If you're already determined to alter your eating habits then this colourful and friendly program will be of interest, and maybe some help. But the unconverted will remain unconverted.

PC **70%**

Mind your language with the help of your computer

Parlez-vous another language? No? Then your computer could help you out. There are quite a few language tutorials available in the public domain, with wildly varying approaches to the subject, as these two examples show...

Cabby (Shareware)

ST • 241091 • South West Software Library
PO Box 562, Wimbourne, Dorset BH21 2YD

It has to be admitted: *Cabby* is versatile. Dull, but versatile.

At first when you load it up it looks like a simple program that teaches you a few basic nouns in french and german, but after a while you realize that it is actually quite adaptable and really quite useful learning tool.

First impressions are far from impressive. You choose a 'packet' of words from the program's memory – each packet contains 20 related words – and load it up. Then one solitary english word flashes up on-screen closely followed by its french or german equivalent, depending on which language you've chosen. They alternate for a few seconds, then the process repeats itself with a new word. So far, so unexciting.

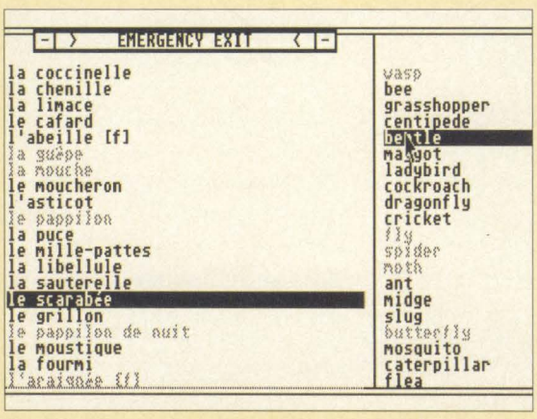
You can speed up the process to whizz through the words, and after a couple of minutes you'll want to. But when the last word has finished flashing you move on to a summary page pairing up all the words.

Finally things start to liven up with the quiz. Basically the English words are listed down the left hand side and the foreign ones are listed on the right. The catch is that they don't match up, and guess what you have to do. OK, so it's not much more exciting than afternoon in class listening to Mrs Froggit droning on about Jean-Claude and Marie, but personally I think this quiz is actually quite a good way of getting the words to stick in your mind.

The real beauty of this program, however, is that you can add more packets yourself using a specially designed supplementary program. And they needn't be just french and german words as it will let you re-configure the keyboard so that the numerical keys at the top can represent special Scandanavian, Spanish and Italian characters as well as French and German ones (things like å, é, ë etc). You just type in 20 English words and their foreign equivalents then save the packet. You can even write phrases if you want (as long as they're short). When you re-enter the main program you can now load any packets that you've created.

It's alright, I suppose. Worthy. Adaptable definitely. But oh so humdrum. To call the graphics basic is being kind. It would be perfect in a classroom environment with a teacher getting all the kids to read out the words as they flash up on screen. But definitely not one to try and get your child to sit down at home and learn their languages.

ST **67%**

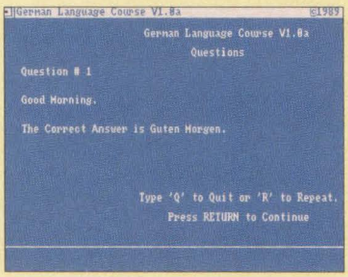


How well can you do on this quiz? If you have trouble matching up more than a couple, perhaps you ought to sit through the whole of *Cabby*

German Language Tutor (PD)

Amiga • 983 • 17-Bit
PO Box 97, Wakefield WF1 1XX

Hmm! This one is on to a loser from the start. You see, it uses digitised speech in that time honoured computer fashion, ie, phonetically, so that every syllable is laboriously spoken in the same monotone drone. They also always end up sounding so mid-atlantic they make Lloyd Grossman sound like Prince Charles. And worse still they are so hard to understand!


German Language Course V1.0a ©1989
German Language Course V1.0a
Questions
Question # 1
Good Morning.
The Correct Answer is Guten Morgen.
Type 'Q' to Quit or 'R' to Repeat.
Press RETURN to Continue

Without the digitised speech *German Language Tutor* isn't too hot. With it, it's worse

So someone called Troy R Blake (sensibly he's included no documentation with the program so you can't track him down but with a name like that he must be American) has used used this system to try and teach you German. The result is so hopeless it's laughable.

A word or phrase pops up on screen, 'Good-bye', for example. After a couple of seconds the computer blurts out a digitised version of the german for good morning and displays how it is spelt on screen. So what you see is, 'Auf Wiedersehen,' but what you hear is, "Err weeduhzayne".

And this is all the program does. You press return and another word or phrase comes up. How long this goes on for I honestly don't know; I'll admit I could stand no more after phrase number 49.

Some of the phrases it includes are admittedly quite useful if you are planning to travel to Germany as a tourist (I'm thirsty, I'm hungry I'm lost, etc) but really you'd be better off with a phrase book. If you try to use this program as a guide to pronunciation and ask a German, 'where is the toilet?' you'll probably end up with a punch in the stomach.

AMIGA **35%**

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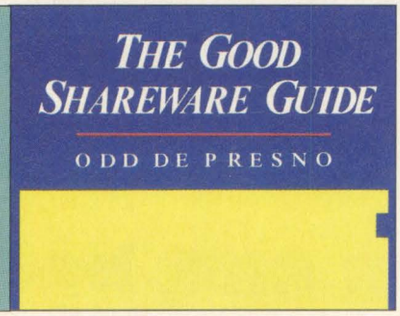

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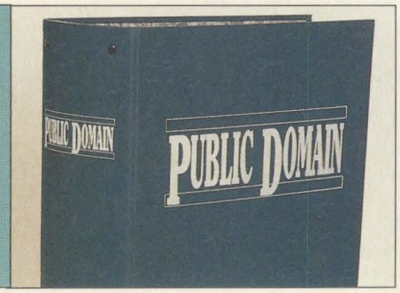

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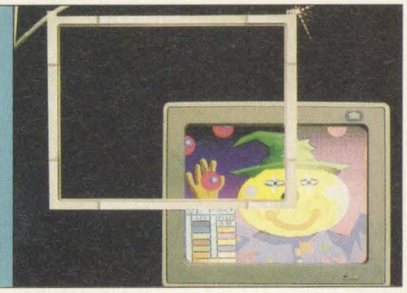

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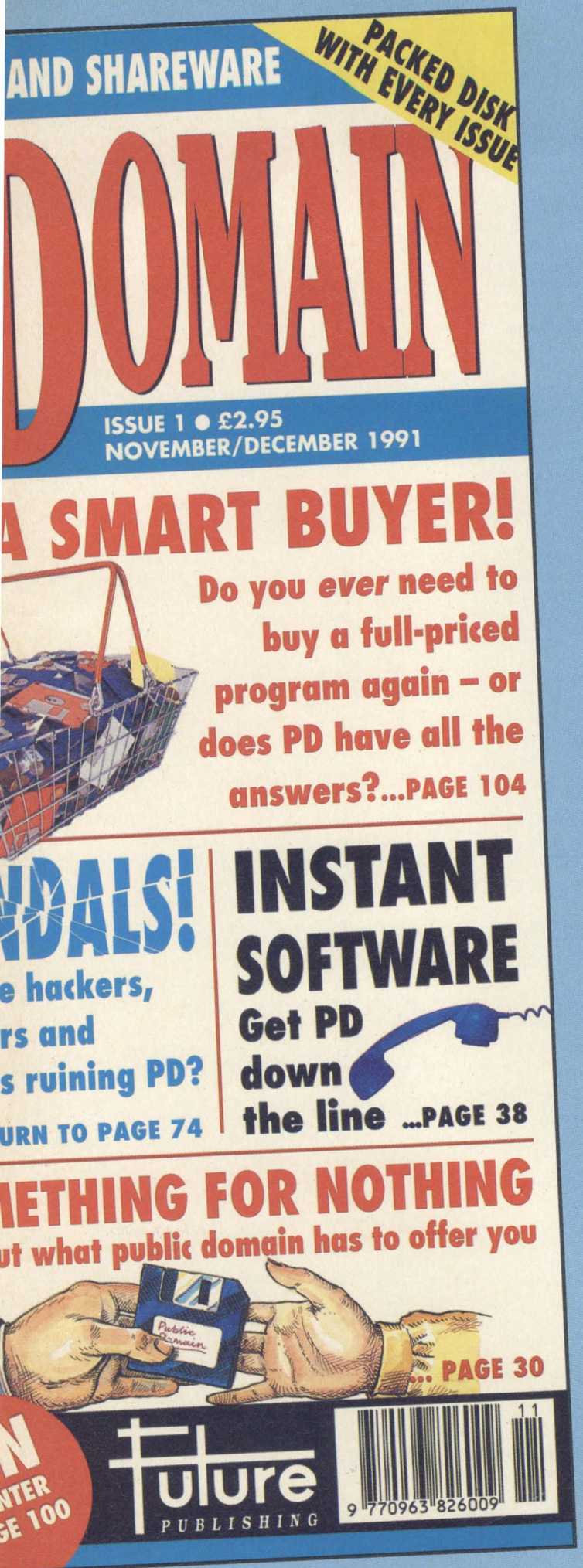
Program packed disk. Quick – turn to pages 6, 7 & 8 for details!

Tri-format disk © Rob Northen Computing

What no cover disk?

Why not ask the nice person behind the counter whether they are keeping it safe for you!

FULL DETAILS OF DISK ON PAGES 6-8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Index

AMIGA

500 Things – The Comeback	D	76
Air Ace	G	44
Alien Breed Animation	D	82
AmigaFox	B&A	58
Ami-FX 4	D	84
Art Sprite Designer	P&U	20
Buzzed	D	82
Bank'n	B&A	62
bBase II	B&A	59
Business Card Maker	B&A	65
Cartoon Brushes	P&U	27
Clear	G	38
Dave's Stunt Animations	D	80
Diskmaster 3.2	P&U	24
Divina's Techno Fright	D	76
ElectroCAD	B&A	57
Enable/Write	B&A	59
German Language Tutor	H&E	102
Golf Score Analyser	H&E	100
Gotta Go!	D	82
Gulf War Conflict	D	84
I-Ching	H&E	98
Imploder 4.0	P&U	25
It's a Lame D-Mo	D	78
Ladybug	G	42
Laterna Magica	D	80
LC24-200 Fonts	P&U	25
The Lemming Animation	D	81
Lemming Curd For Breakfast	D	76
Magad! Megademo	D	81
Maths Wizard	H&E	101
MessySID	P&U	18
Miami Vice Remix	D	75
Molec 3D	H&E	95
Muttley on the Bounty	D	80
Nag	B&A	64
Nu	G	40
Pacman 87	G	39
Perfect Pictures Volume One	D	81
PrintStudio	P&U	24
Raphael's Revenge	G	46
Rebels' – The Thing	D	81
Rhapsody In Blue	D	75
Storyland 2	H&E	96
TCSH	G	40
Terminator 2 Slideshow	D	75
Tetracopy	P&U	28
Text Engine	B&A	66
Tony Horgan's 'Charly'	D	81
Triple Yahtzee	G	45
Weird Science Astronomy Slideshow	D	74
System Exerciser	P&U	20
Uedit	B&A	65
VisiCalc	B&A	60
Wildfire Megademo	D	74
Windows Bench	P&U	22
WWF Slideshow	D	78

PC

AMP Hard Disk Directory	P&U	27
Balloon Speller	H&E	94
Cat Disk	P&U	24
Catchem	G	41
Commander Keen 4	G	40
Compu-Chef	H&E	98
Cyclist's Companion	H&E	96
Disktree	P&U	19
Dress-Me-Up	H&E	94
Easy Presentation Graphics	B&A	66
Ed	B&A	64
Executive Director	P&U	19
Exploring Music	H&E	95
FontEd	P&U	25
GoalSeeker	B&A	60
Hotel and Public House Inventory Audit Software	B&A	57
Infoplus	P&U	19
Interrupt List	P&U	20
Leaner	H&E	101
LyneWriter	B&A	59
mCalc	B&A	62
Narc	P&U	27
Othello	G	42
PC Man	G	39
PC Studio	P&U	27
Print Plus	B&A	56
Shooting Gallery	G	39
Super ZTT	G	46

ST

1900s USA	H&E	96
About the House	H&E	100
Almanac	B&A	58
Atzenta V2	B&A	56
Cabby	H&E	102
Cheetah	P&U	22
Clacker	G	38
Crossword Designer	H&E	95
DataStore v1.2	B&A	60
Digi-Synth Number One	D	75
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Fatman Demo	D	74
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Punish Your Machine	D	80
Red Alert	G	42
Robot Words	H&E	100
STE Boot	P&U	28
Sumoning of the Spawn	D	78
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PC TYPE 4 (4) (HD) Latest version from Buttonware.
WORD FUGUE (2) Many features, including WordStar commands.
GALAXY LITE (1) Latest version, improved printing.
SIMON (1) Excellent pop-up memory resident editor.
MULTIWORD (1) Memory resident thesaurus.
THESAUR PLUS (1) (HD) Good pop-up, use with your w/p.
STYLE CHECKERS (1) Checks the readability of text.
READABILITY PLUS (1) Ex-commercial writing analysis.
IMAGEPRINT (2) High quality printing on a dot matrix.
SIGNSMITH (1) Create letterheads/posters/logos/pics.
LQ (1) Print enhancer, fonts, print-spooler & more.
FONTASTIC (1) Good font collection & font editor.
BRADFORD/CITYDESK (1) High quality typesetting/fonts.
HYPERSHELL v4 (3) UK Hypertext system.

DATABASE MANAGEMENT

PC FILE 5 (3) (HD) Powerful D/Base III compatible.
FILE EXPRESS v5 (4) New version, powerful but easy to use.
FREEFILE (1) Easy to learn menu-driven database.
ZEPHYR (2) (HD) Easy to use, fully relational D/Base.
WAMPUM v4.2 (1) Fast, fully-relational. Great value!
SR-INFO (2) Shareware upgrade of VP-Info.
CLUB (1) UK Club membership program.

SPREADSHEETS

PC CALC+ v2 (3) Popular spreadsheet from Buttonware
AS-EASY-AS (1) Famous 123-style spreadsheet.
PIVOT (1) Prints 123 s/sheets in landscape/portrait.
TUTOR 1-2-3 (1) Interactive tutorial for 123 beginners.

INTEGRATED PROGRAMS

DESK COMMANDO (1) Notepad, calc, calendar, DOS shell
ALT (1) Editor / calculator / address book / calendar etc.
G'DAY MATE (1) Diary, Calendar, notepad etc.
FRIDAY (1) (HD) Super pop-up Organiser/diary/notebook.

PAINTING/DRAWING

FRACTAL GRAFICS (1). PCX Drawing using Fractals.
VGA PAINT (1) Excellent VGA graphics/drawing program
FINGERPAINT (1) Accurate mouse/keyboard paint program
DESKTOP PAINT (1) (HD) (EGA or Hercules) Superb B/W painting.
DESKTOP PAINT 256 (1) (HD) (640K & Super VGA) Full 256 Colour.

DESIGN

PC KEYDRAW (4) Powerful drawing & design package.
EASYDRAW (1) Technical drawing, flowcharts, diagrams
DANCAD 3D (5) (HD) 3D wire-frame drawing tool.
DRAFT CHOICE (1) Accurate, easy to use CAD program.
CHARTS ULIMITED (1) Flowcharts/electrical/Gantt etc.
T SQUARE (4) (HD) Superb affordable CAD package.

GRAPHICS UTILITIES

GRAPHIC WORKSHOP (2) Converts/scales/dithers: many picture formats.
ICONVERT (1) Converts many formats + screen preview.

CLIP ART

OFFICE IMAGES (1) State format: PCX/MAC
DECORATIVE DROPCAP (1) Decorative capitals in PCX and IMG
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BUSINESS

LEADMASTER (1) (HD) Complete sales office system.
OPTIMA (1) (HD) very good project management.
MANAGEMENT TRAINING (1) Thorough training program.
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FORMGEN (1) Create & fill out customised forms.

FINANCE

PAGE FINANCE CONTROL (2) (HD) Leading finance package.
FREEWAY PAYROLL (3) Latest version. UK tax/NI rules.
FREEWAY CASHBOOK (3) Profit & loss/VAT/bank rec.. etc.
FREEWAY LEDGERMASTER (4) Major new integrated system
ULTIMATE SALES (2) (HD) Integrated sales/invoice/stock.

DOS UTILITIES

DAZZLE (1) EGA/VGA colour kaleidoscope - AMAZING!
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TREEVIEW (1) Highly rated file management utility.
4DOS (1) Improves on DOS commands & adds 35 more.
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POWERBATCH (1) Powerful extension to batch files.
MICRO-MACRO-BAT (1) Additional batch file commands.
QUICK TITLES (1) Rapidly creates title screens.
POWERMENU (1) (HD) Friendly menus, easier than DOS.
AUTOMENU (1) (HD) Run programs with single keystrokes.
MCAFFEE VIRUS TOOLS (2) Anti-virus programs.
PC PROMPT (1) Mem.res. screen prompt/help screens.
PC DOS HELP (1) Highly rated DOS tutor/detailed refs.
FLEXIBAK (1) (HD) UK hard disk back-up program.
BACK & FORTH (2) (HD) Fantastic task manager.

PROGRAMMING

WINDOW BOSS (2) C tools for windows/menus/help.
C TUTOR (2) Excellent tutorial with examples.
PERSONAL C COMPILER (1) Best Shareware C compiler?
A86/D86 (1) Fast Assembler/debugger.
8086 TUTOR (1) Intro to assembly language programming.
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SOLVER (1) Crossword, anagram, & word square solver.
NIGHT SKY (4) UK Pgm: planets/stars/eclipses/comets.
WEATHER (1) Use barometer + thermometer + PC to forecast.
FOOTBALL FORECAST (1) Popular pools/fixed odds system.
PUNTER'S PAL (1) UK horse-racing analysis program.

GAMES

SOCCER GAME (1) Get your team to the First Division.
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ARCADE GAMES (3) 18 games inc. Kong, Bugs, Jumpjoe.
RETURN TO KROZ (1) Adventure game, mono or colour.
INSANITY (1) Fantastic Wizard Maze game, needs colour.
DRACULA IN LONDON (1) Good graphic adventure game.
GET LUCKY (1) Collection of harmless (over 18's only) games.
ROCKSTAR (1) Beat sex/drugs/rock'n'roll & be a star.
SLEUTH/HANGMAN (1) Find the murderer!
CGA SCRABBLE (1) Good colour version of board game.
BACKGAMMON (1) New game plus Cribbage & Draughts.
POWERCHESS (1) Super chess game, Hercules/CGA/EGA or VGA

EGA/VGA GAMES

VGA SHOOTING GALLERY (1) 7 shooting competitions.
EGA ARCADE (1) 6 games including Mazewar & Shuttle.
SCRABBLE (1) with expandable dictionary of words.
BASS CLASS (1) Three day Bass fishing tournament.
EGA GAMES #2 (1) 7 games including PCMAN and REFLEX
EGA MAHJONGG (1) Super graphics, can design your tiles.
CUNNING FOOTBALL (1) American Football simulation.
EGA GAMES #4 (1) POKER & SOLITAIRE.
EGA MONOPOLY (1) American version, superb graphics.
EGA GAMES #5 (1) 6 games including EGAWHEEL, & TRISK
DARK AGES (1) (needs 286) Supports Ad Lib/Sound Blaster cards.
GLOBAL WARFARE (1) New version of the RISK-type game.

EARLY LEARNING

HOORAY FOR HENRIETTA (1) Maths for 5 to 12 year old.
HENRIETTA'S BOOK of SPELLS (1) Spelling for age 7 to 14
AMY"S FIRST PRIMER (1) Pre-school educational games.
PC LEARNING GAMES (4) (HD) (EGA) Maths, Words etc (age 2 to 8)
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EDUCATION

PC TUTOR (1) Good interactive computer tutorial.
TYPING TUTORS (1) Good tutors - PC TOUCH & FASTYPE
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